Wilhelm Lewis

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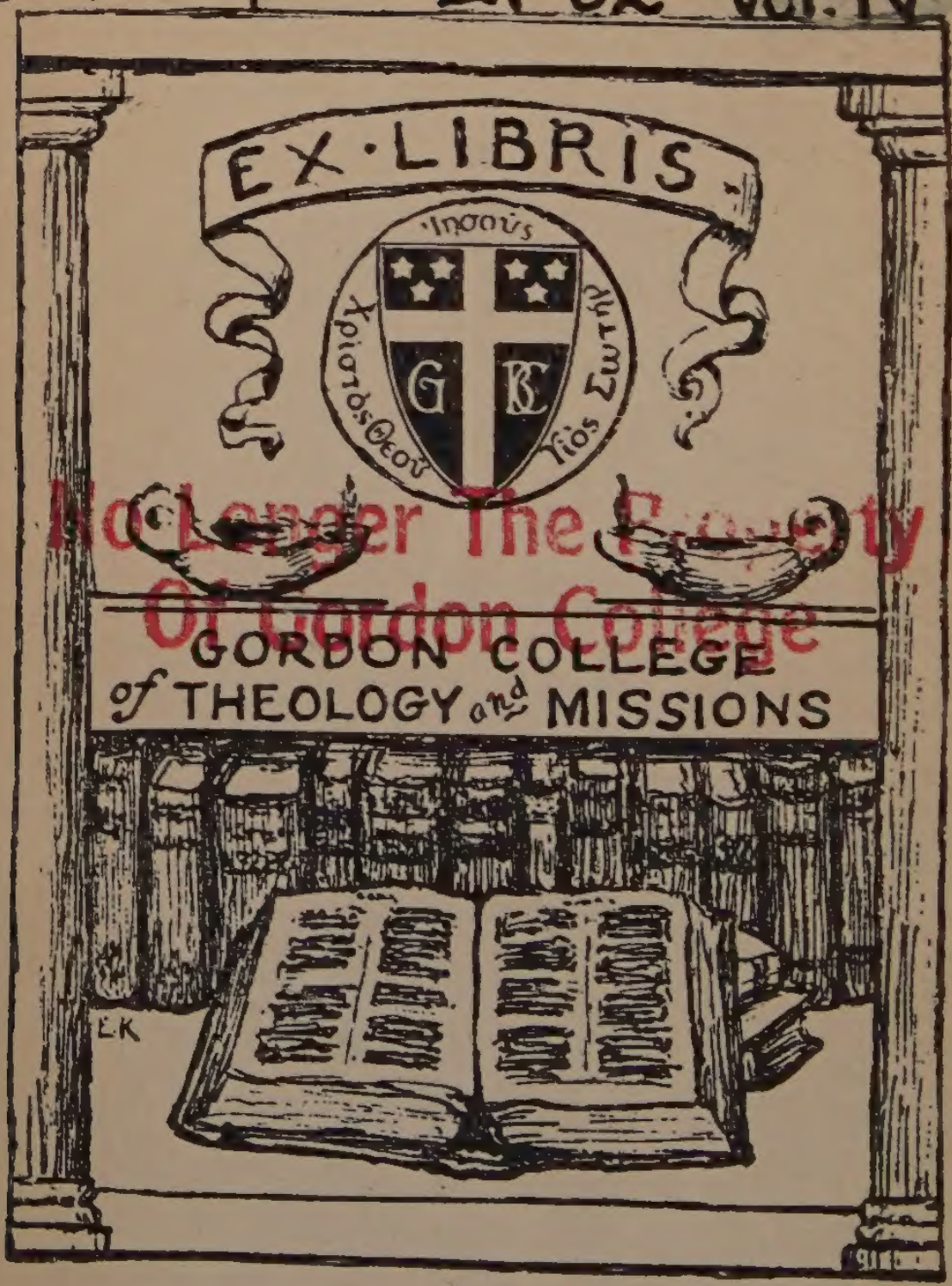

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BRACEBRIDGE HALL BY WASHINGTON IRVING

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BRACEBRIDGE HALL

ENGLISH COUNTRY-GENTLEMEN.

His certain life that never can deceive him,
Is full of thousand sweets, and rich content;
The smooth-leaved beeches in the field receive him
With coolest shade, till noontide's heat be spent.
His life is neither tost in boisterous seas
Or the vexatious world; or lost in slothful ease.
Pleased and full blest he lives when he his God can please.

PHINEAS FLETCHER.

I TAKE great pleasure in accompanying the Squire in his perambulations about his estate, in which he is often attended by a kind of cabinet council. His prime minister, the steward, is a very worthy and honest old man, who assumes a right of way; that is to say, a right to have his own way, from having lived time out of mind on the place. He loves the estate even better than he does the Squire, and thwarts the latter sadly in many of his projects of im-

provement, being a little prone to disapprove of every plan that does not originate with himself.

In the course of one of these perambulations, I have known the Squire to point out some important alteration which he was contemplating, in the disposition or cultivation of the grounds; this of course would be opposed by the steward, and a long argument would ensue over a stile, or on a rising piece of ground, until the Squire, who had a high opinion of the other's ability and integrity, would be fain to give up the point. This concession, I observed, would immediately mollify the old man, and, after walking over a field or two in silence, with his hands behind his back, chewing the cud of reflection, he would suddenly turn to the Squire, and observe, that "he had been turning the matter over in his mind, and, upon the whole, he believed he would take his honor's advice." *

Christy, the huntsman, is another of the Squire's occasional attendants, to whom he con-

* The reader who has perused a little work published by the author several years subsequently to "Bracebridge Hall," narrating a visit to Abbotsford, will detect the origin of the above anecdote in the conferences between Sir Walter Scott and his right-hand man, Tommy Purdie. Indeed, the author is indebted for several of his traits of the Squire to observations made on Sir Walter Scott during that visit, though he had to be cautious and sparing in drawing from that source.

tinually refers in all matters of local history, as to a chronicle of the estate, having, in a manner, been acquainted with many of the trees from the very time that they were acorns. Old Nimrod, as has been shown, is rather pragmatical in those points of knowledge on which he values himself; but the Squire rarely contradicts him, and is, in fact, one of the most indulgent potentates that was ever hen-pecked by his ministry.

He often laughs about it himself, and evidently yields to these old men more from the bent of his own humor than from any want of proper authority. He likes this honest independence of old age, and is well aware that these trusty followers love and honor him in their hearts. He is perfectly at ease about his own dignity and the respect of those around him; nothing disgusts him sooner than any appearance of fawning or sycophancy.

I really have seen no display of royal state that could compare with one of the Squire's progresses about his paternal fields and through his hereditary woodlands, with several of these faithful adherents about him, and followed by a body-guard of dogs. He encourages a frankness and manliness of deportment among his dependents, and is the personal friend of his tenants, inquiring into their concerns, and as-

sisting them in times of difficulty and hardship. This has rendered him one of the most popular, and of course one of the happiest, of landlords.

Indeed, I do not know a more enviable condition of life than that of an English gentleman, of sound judgment and good feelings, who passes the greater part of his time on an hereditary estate in the country. From the excellence of the roads and the rapidity and exactness of public conveyances, he is enabled to command all the comforts and conveniences, all the intelligence and novelties of the capital, while he is removed from its hurry and distraction. He has ample means of occupation and amusement within his own domains; he may diversify his time by rural occupations, by rural sports, by study, and by the delights of friendly society collected within his own hospitable halls.

Or if his views and feelings are of a more extensive and liberal nature, he has it greatly in his power to do good, and to have that good immediately reflected back upon himself. He can render essential services to his country by assisting in the disinterested administration of the laws; by watching over the opinions and principles of the lower orders around him; by diffusing among them those lights important to their welfare; by mingling frankly among them, gaining their confidence, becoming the imme-

diate auditor of their complaints, informing himself of their wants, making himself a channel through which their grievances may be quietly communicated to the proper sources of mitigation and relief; or by becoming, if need be, the intrepid and incorruptible guardian of their liberties—the enlightened champion of their rights.

All this can be done without any sacrifice of personal dignity, without any degrading arts of popularity, without any truckling to vulgar prejudices or concurrence in vulgar clamor; but by the steady influence of sincere and friendly counsel, of fair, upright and generous deportment. Whatever may be said of English mobs and English demagogues, I have never met with a people more open to reason, more considerate in their temper, more tractable by argument in the roughest times, than the English. They are remarkably quick at discerning and appreciating whatever is manly and honorable. They are by nature and habit methodical and orderly; and they feel the value of all that is regular and respectable. They may occasionally be deceived by sophistry, and excited into turbulence by public distresses and the misrepresentations of designing men; but open their eyes, and they will eventually rally round the landmarks of steady truth and deliberated good

sense. They are fond of established customs and long-established names; and that love of order and quiet which characterizes the nation gives a vast influence to the descendants of the old families, whose forefathers have been lords of the soil from time immemorial.

It is when the rich and well-educated and highly-privileged classes neglect their duties, when they neglect to study the interests, and conciliate the affections, and instruct the opinions, and champion the rights of the people, that the latter become discontented and turbulent, and fall into the hands of demagogues: the demagogue always steps in where the patriot is wanting. There is a common high-handed cant among the high-feeding, and, as they fancy themselves, high-minded men, about putting down the mob; but all true physicians know that it is better to sweeten the blood than attack the tumor, to apply the emollient rather than the cautery. It is absurd in a country like England, where there is so much freedom and such a jealousy of right, for any man to assume an aristocratical tone, and talk superciliously of the common people. There is no rank that makes him independent of the opinions and affections of his fellow-men, there is no rank nor distinction that severs him from his fellow-subjects; and if, by any gradual neglect or

assumption on the one side, and discontent and jealousy on the other, the orders of society should really separate, let those who stand on the eminence beware that the chasm is not mining at their feet. The orders of society in all well-constituted governments are mutually bound together and important to each other; there can be no such thing in a free government as a vacuum; and whenever one is likely to take place, by the drawing off of the rich and intelligent from the poor, the bad passions of society will rush in to fill up the space, and rend the whole asunder.

Though born and brought up in a republic, and more and more confirmed in republican principles by every year's observation and experience, I am not insensible to the excellence that may exist in other forms of government; nor to the fact that they may be more suitable to the situation and circumstances of the countries in which they exist; I have endeavored rather to look at them as they are, and to observe how they are calculated to effect the end which they propose. Considering, therefore, the mixed nature of the government of this country, and its representative form, I have looked with admiration at the manner in which the wealth and influence and intelligence were spread over its whole surface,—not, as in some

monarchies, drained from the country, and collected in towns and cities. I have considered the great rural establishments of the nobility, and the lesser establishments of the gentry, as so many reservoirs of wealth and intelligence distributed about the kingdom, apart from the towns, to irrigate, freshen, and fertilize the surrounding country. I have looked upon them, too, as the august retreat of patriots and statesmen, where, in the enjoyment of honorable independence and elegant leisure, they might train up their minds to appear in those legislative assemblies whose debates and decisions form the study and precedents of other nations, and involve the interests of the world.

I have been both surprised and disappointed, therefore, at finding that on this subject I was often indulging in an Utopian dream, rather than a well-founded opinion. I have been concerned at finding that these fine estates were too often involved, and mortgaged, or placed in the hands of creditors, and the owners exiled from their paternal lands. There is an extravagance, I am told, that runs parallel with wealth; a lavish expenditure among the great; a senseless competition among the aspiring; a heedless, joyous dissipation among all the upper ranks, that often beggars even these splendid establishments, breaks down the pride and principles

of their possessors, and makes too many of them mere place-hunters, or shifting absentees. It is thus that so many are thrown into the hands of government; and a court which ought to be the most pure and honorable in Europe, is so often degraded by noble but importunate time-servers. It is thus, too, that so many become exiles from their native land, crowding the hotels of foreign countries, and expending upon thankless strangers the wealth so hardly drained from their laborious peasantry. I have looked upon these latter with a mixture of censure and concern. Knowing the almost bigoted fondness of an Englishman for his native home, I can conceive what must be their compunction and regret, when, amidst the sun-burnt plains of France, they call to mind the green fields of England, the hereditary groves which they have abandoned, and the hospitable roof of their fathers, which they have left desolate, or to be inhabited by strangers. But retrenchment is no plea for abandonment of country. They have risen with the prosperity of the land; let them abide its fluctuations, and conform to its fortunes. It is not for the rich to fly because the country is suffering: let them share, in their relative proportion, the common lot; they owe it to the land that has elevated them to honor and affluence. When the poor have to diminish their

scanty morsels of bread; when they have to compound with the cravings of nature, and study with how little they can do, and not be starved; it is not then for the rich to fly, and diminish still farther the resources of the poor, that they themselves may live in splendor in a cheaper country. Let them rather retire to their estates, and there practise retrenchment. Let them return to that noble simplicity, that practical good sense, that honest pride, which form the foundation of true English character, and from them they may again rear the edifice of fair and honorable prosperity.

On the rural habits of the English nobility and gentry, on the manner in which they discharge their duties on their patrimonial possessions, depend greatly the virtue and welfare of the nation. So long as they pass the greater part of their time in the quiet and purity of the country; surrounded by the monuments of their illustrious ancestors; surrounded by every thing that can inspire generous pride, noble emulation, and amiable and magnanimous sentiment; so long they are safe, and in them the nation may repose its interest and its honor. But the moment that they become the servile throngers of court avenues, and give themselves up to the political intrigues and heartless dissipations of the metropolis, that moment they

lose the real nobility of their natures, and become the mere leeches of the country.

That the great majority of nobility and gentry in England are endowed with high notions of honor and independence, I thoroughly believe. They have evidenced it lately on very important questions, and have given an example of adherence to principle, in preference to party and power, that must have astonished many of the venal and obsequious courts of Europe. Such are the glorious effects of freedom, when infused into a constitution. But it seems to me that they are apt to forget the positive nature of their duties, and to consider their eminent privileges only as so many means of self-indulgence. They should recollect that in a constitution like that of England the titled orders are intended to be as useful as they are ornamental, and it is their virtues alone that can render them both. Their duties are divided between the sovereign and the subjects; surrounding and giving lustre and dignity to the throne, and at the same time tempering and mitigating its rays, until they are transmitted in mild and genial radiance to the people. Born to leisure and opulence, they owe the exercise of their talents, and the expenditure of their wealth, to their native country. They may be compared to the clouds; which, being drawn up by the

sun, and elevated in the heavens, reflect and magnify his splendor, while they repay the earth, whence they derive their sustenance, by returning their treasures to its bosom in fertilizing showers.

A BACHELOR'S CONFESSIONS.

"I 'll live a private, pensive, single life."
THE COLLIER OF CROYDON.

I WAS sitting in my room, a morning or two since, reading, when some one tapped at the door, and Master Simon entered. He had an unusually fresh appearance; he wore a bright-green riding-coat, with a bunch of violets in the buttonhole, and had the air of an old bachelor trying to rejuvenate himself. He had not, however, his usual briskness and vivacity; but loitered about the room with somewhat of absence of manner, humming the old song—"Go, lovely rose, tell her that wastes her time and me"; and then, leaning against the window, and looking upon the landscape, he uttered a very audible sigh. As I had not been accustomed to see Master Simon in a pensive mood, I thought there might be some vexation preying on his mind, and endeavored to introduce a cheerful strain of conversation; but he was not in the vein to follow it up, and proposed a walk.

It was a beautiful morning of that soft vernal temperature which seems to thaw all the frost out of one's blood, aud set all nature in a ferment. The very fishes felt its influence; the cautious trout ventured out of his dark hole to seek his mate; the roach and the dace rose up to the surface of the brook to bask in the sunshine; and the amorous frog piped from among the rushes. If ever an oyster can really fall in love, as has been said or sung, it must be on such a morning.

The weather certainly had its effect upon Master Simon, for he seemed obstinately bent upon the pensive mood. Instead of stepping briskly along, smacking his dog-whip, whistling quaint ditties, or telling sporting anecdotes, he leaned on my arm, and talked about the approachiug nuptials, whence he made several digressions upon the character of womankind, touched a little upon the tender passion, and made sundry very excellent, though rather trite, observations upon disappointments in love. It was evident he had something on his mind which he wished to impart, but felt awkward in approaching it. I was curious to see what this strain would lead to, but determined not to assist him. Indeed, I mischievously pretended to turn the conversation, and talked of his usual topics, dogs, horses, and

hunting; but he was very brief in his replies, and invariably got back, by hook or by crook, into the sentimental vein.

At length we came to a clump of trees overhanging a whispering brook, with a rustic bench at their feet. The trees were grievously scored with letters and devices, grown out of all shape and size by the growth of the bark; and it appeared that this grove had served as a kind of register of the family loves from time immemorial. Here Master Simon made a pause, pulled up a tuft of flowers, threw them one by one into the water, and at length, turning somewhat abruptly upon me, asked me if I had ever been in love. I confess the question startled me a little, as I am not over-fond of making confessions of my amorous follies, and above all should never dream of choosing my friend Master Simon for a confidant. He did uot wait, however, for a reply; the inquiry was merely a prelude to a confession on his own part; and after several circumlocutions and whimsical preambles, he fairly disburdened himself of a very tolerable story of his having been crossed in love.

The reader will, very probably, suppose that it related to the gay widow who jilted him not long since at Doncaster races;—no such thing. It was about a sentimental passion that he once had for a most beautiful young lady, who wrote

poetry and played on the harp. He used to serenade her; and, indeed, he described several tender and gallant scenes, in which he was evidently picturing himself in his mind's eye as some elegant hero of romance, though unfortunately for the tale, I only saw him as he stood before me, a dapper little old bachelor, with a face like an apple that had dried with the bloom on it.

What were the particulars of this tender tale I have already forgotten; indeed, I listened to it with a heart like a very pebble-stone, having hard work to repress a smile while Master Simon was putting on the amorous swain, uttering every now and then a sigh, and endeavoring to look sentimental and melancholy.

All that I recollect is, that the lady, according to his account, was certainly a little touched: for she used to accept all the music that he copied for her harp, and all the patterns that he drew for her dresses; and he began to flatter himself, after a long course of delicate attentions, that he was gradually fanning up a gentle flame in her heart, when she suddenly accepted the hand of a rich, boisterous, fox-hunting baronet, without either music or sentiment, who carried her by storm, after a fortnight's courtship.

Master Simon could not help concluding by some observation about "modest merit," and the power of gold over the sex. As a remembrance of his passion, he pointed out a heart carved on the bark of one of the trees, but which, in the process of time, had grown out into a large excrescence; and he showed me a lock of her hair, which he wore in a true lover's knot, in a large gold brooch.

I have seldom met with an old bachelor who had not, at some time or other, his nonsensical moment, when he would become tender and sentimental, talk about the concerns of the heart, and have some confession of a delicate nature to make. Almost every man has some little trait of romance in his life, to which he looks back with fondness, and about which he is apt to grow garrulous occasionally. He recollects himself as he was at the time, young and gamesome, and forgets that his hearers have no other idea of the hero of the tale but such as he may appear at the time of telling it; peradventure, a withered, whimsical, spindle-shanked old gentleman. With married men, it is true, this is not so frequently the case; their amorous romance is apt to decline after marriage; why, I cannot for the life of me imagine; but with a bachelor, though it may slumber, it never dies. It is always liable to break out again in

transient flashes, and never so much so as on a spring morning in the country, or on a winter evening when seated in his solitary chamber, stirring up the fire, and talking of matrimony.

The moment Master Simon had gone through his confession, and, to use the common phrase, "had made a clean breast of it," he became quite himself again. He had settled the point which had been worrying his mind, and doubtless considered himself established as a man of sentiment in my opinion. Before we had finished our morning's stroll, he was singing as blithe as a grass-hopper, whistling to his dogs, and telling droll stories; and I recollect that he was particularly facetious that day at dinner on the subject of matrimony, and uttered several excellent jokes, not to be found in Joe Miller, that made the bride elect blush and look down, but set all the old gentlemen at the table in a roar, and absolutely brought tears into the general's eyes.

ENGLISH GRAVITY.

"Merrie England!"
ANCIENT PHRASE.

THERE is nothing so rare as for a man to ride his hobby without molestation. I find the Squire has not so undisturbed an indulgence in his humors as I had imagined; but has been repeatedly thwarted of late, and has suffered a kind of well-meaning persecution from a Mr. Faddy, an old gentlemen of some weight, at least of purse, who has recently moved into the neighborhood. He is a worthy and substantial manufacturer, who, having accumulated a large fortune by dint of steam-engines and spinning-jennies, has retired from business, and set up for a country gentleman. He has taken an old country-seat, and refitted it; and painted and plastered it until it looks not unlike his own manufactory. He has been particularly careful in mending the walls and hedges, and putting up notices of spring-guns and man-

traps in every part of his premises. Indeed, he shows great jealousy about his territorial rights, having stopped up a footpath which led across his fields; and given warning, in staring letters, that whoever was found trespassing on those grounds would be prosecuted with the utmost rigor of the law. He has brought into the country with him all the practical maxims of the town, and the bustling habits of business; and is one of those sensible, useful, prosing, troublesome, intolerable old gentlemen, who go about wearying and worrying society with excellent plans for public utility.

He is very much disposed to be on intimate terms with the Squire, and calls on him every now and then, with some project for the good of the neighborhood, which happens to run diametrically opposite to some one or other of the Squire's peculiar notions, but which is "too sensible a measure" to be openly opposed. He has annoyed him excessively by enforcing the vagrant laws; persecuting the gypsies, and endeavoring to suppress country wakes and holiday games; which he considers great nuisances, and reprobates as causes of the deadly sin of idleness.

There is evidently in all this a little of the ostentation of newly-acquired consequence; the tradesman is gradually swelling into the aristo-

crat; and he begins to grow excessively intolerant of every thing that is not genteel. He has a great deal to say about "the common people"; talks much of his park, his preserves, and the necessity of enforcing the game-laws more strictly; and makes frequent use of the phrase, "the gentry of the neighborhood."

He came to the Hall lately, with a face full of business, that he and the Squire, to use his own words, "might lay their heads together," to hit upon some mode of putting a stop to the frolicking at the village on the approaching May-day. It drew, he said, idle people together from all parts of the neighborhood, who spent the day fiddling, dancing, and carousing, instead of staying at home to work for their families.

Now, as the Squire, unluckily, is at the bottom of these May-day revels, it may be supposed that these suggestions of the sagacious Mr. Faddy were not received with the best grace in the world. It is true, the old gentleman is too courteous to show any temper to a guest in his own house, but no sooner was he gone than the indignation of the Squire found vent, at having his poetical cobwebs invaded by this buzzing blue-bottle fly of traffic. In his warmth he inveighed against the whole race of manufacturers, who, I found, were sore disturbers of his comfort. "Sir," said he, with emotion, "it

makes my heart bleed to see all our fine streams dammed up and bestrode by cotton-mills ; our valleys smoking with steam-engines, and the din of the hammer and the loom scaring away all our rural delights. What 's to become of merry old England, when its manor-houses are all turned into manufactories, and its sturdy peasantry into pin-makers and stocking-weavers ? I have looked in vain for merry Sherwood, and all the greenwood haunts of Robin Hood ; the whole country is covered with manufacturing towns. I have stood on the ruins of Dudley Castle, and looked around, with an aching heart, on what were once its feudal domains of verdant and beautiful country. Sir, I beheld a mere campus phlegræ ; a region of fire ; reeking with coal-pits, and furnaces, and smelting-houses, vomiting forth flames and smoke. The pale and ghastly people, toiling among vile exhalations, looked more like demons than human beings ; the clanking wheels and engines seen through the murky atmosphere, looked like instruments of torture in this pandemonium. What is to become of the country with these evils rankling in its very core ? Sir, these manufacturers will be the ruin of our rural manners ; they will destroy the national character ; they will not leave materials for a single line of poetry ! "

The Squire is apt to wax eloquent on such themes, and I could hardly help smiling at this whimsical lamentation over national industry and public improvement. I am told, however, that he really grieves at the growing of trade, as destroying the charm of life. He considers every new short-hand mode of doing things as an inroad of snug sordid method; and thinks that this will soon become a mere matter-of-fact world, where life will be reduced to a mathematical calculation of conveniences, and every thing will be done by steam.

He maintains, also, that the nation has declined in its free and joyous spirit in proportion as it has turned its attention to commerce and manufactures; and that in old times, when England was an idler, it was also a merrier little island. In support of this opinion, he adduces the frequency and splendor of ancient festivals and merry-makings, and the hearty spirit with which they were kept up by all classes of people. His memory is stored with the accounts given by Stow, in his survey of London, of the holiday revels at the inns of court, the Christmas mummeries, and the maskings and bonfires about the streets. London, he says, in those days, resembled the continental cities in its picturesque manners and amusements. The court used to dance after

dinner on public occasions. After the coronation-dinner of Richard II., for example, the king, the prelates, the nobles, the knights, and the rest of the company danced in Westminster Hall to the music of the minstrels. The example of the court was followed by the middling classes, and so down to the lowest, and the whole nation was a dancing, jovial nation. He quotes a lively city picture of the times, given by Stow, which resembles the lively scenes one may often see in the gay city of Paris; for he tells us that on holidays, after evening prayers, the maidens in London used to assemble before the door, in sight of their masters and dames, and while one played on a timbrel, the others danced for garlands, hanged athwart the street.

"Where will we meet with such merry groups nowadays?" the Squire will exclaim, shaking his head mournfully;—"and then as to the gayety that prevailed in dress throughout all ranks of society, and made the very streets so fine and picturesque. 'I have myself,' says Gervaise Markham, 'met an ordinary tapster in his silk stockings, garters deep fringed with gold lace, the rest of his apparel suitable, with cloak lined with velvet!' Nashe, too, who wrote in 1593, exclaims at the finery of the nation: 'England, the player's stage of gorgeous attire,

the ape of all nation's superfluities, the continual masquer in outlandish habiliments.' "

Such are a few of the authorities quoted by the Squire by way of contrasting what he supposes to have been the former vivacity of the nation with its present monotonous character. "John Bull," he will say, "was then a gay cavalier, with a sword by his side and a feather in his cap; but he is now a plodding citizen, in snuff-colored coat and gaiters."

By the by, there really appears to have been some change in the national character since the days of which the Squire is so fond of talking; those days when this little island acquired its favorite old title of "merry England." This may be attributed in part to the growing hardships of the times, and the necessity of turning the whole attention to the means of subsistence; but England's gayest customs prevailed at times when her common people enjoyed comparatively few of the comforts and conveniences which they do at present. It may be still more attributed to the universal spirit of gain, and the calculating habits which commerce has introduced; but I am inclined to attribute it chiefly to the gradual increase of the liberty of the subject, and the growing freedom and activity of opinion.

A free people are apt to be grave and thought-

ful. They have high and important matters to occupy their minds. They feel it their right, their interest, and their duty to mingle in public concerns, and to watch over the general welfare. The continual exercise of the mind on political topics gives intenser habits of thinking, and a more serious and earnest demeanor. A nation becomes less gay, but more intellectually active and vigorous. It evinces less play of the fancy, but more power of the imagination; less taste and elegance, but more grandeur of mind; less animated vivacity, but deeper enthusiasm.

It is when men are shut out of the regions of manly thought by a despotic government; when every grave and lofty theme is rendered perilous to discussion and almost to reflection; it is then that they turn to the safer occupations of taste and amusement; trifles rise to importance, and occupy the craving activity of intellect. No being is more void of care and reflection than the slave; none dances more gayly in his intervals of labor: but make him free, give him rights and interests to guard, and he becomes thoughtful and laborious.

The French are a gayer people than the English. Why? Partly from temperament, perhaps; but greatly because they have been accustomed to governments which surrounded

the free exercise of thought with danger, and where he only was safe who shut his eyes and ears to public events, and enjoyed the passing pleasure of the day. Within late years they have had more opportunity of exercising their minds; and within late years the national character has essentially changed. Never did the French enjoy such a degree of feedom as they do at this moment, and at this moment the French are comparatively a grave people.

GYPSIES.

What 's that to absolute freedom; such as the very beggars have; to feast and revel here to-day, and yonder to-morrow; next day where they please; and so on still, the whole country or kingdom over? There 's liberty! the birds of the air can take no more.—JOVIAL CREW.

SINCE the meeting with the gypsies, which I have related in a former paper, I have observed several of them haunting the purlieus of the Hall, notwithstanding a positive interdiction of the Squire. They are part of a gang which has long kept about this neighborhood to the great annoyance of the farmers, whose poultry-yards often suffer from their nocturnal invasions. They are, however, in some measure, patronized by the Squire, who considers the race as belonging to the good old times; which, to confess the private truth, seem to have abounded with good-for-nothing characters.

This roving crew is called "Starlight Tom's Gang," from the name of its chieftain, a notorious poacher. I have heard repeatedly of the misdeeds of this "minion of the moon"; for every midnight depredation in park, or fold,

or farmyard, is laid to his charge. Starlight Tom, in fact, answers to his name; he seems to walk in darkness, and, like a fox, to be traced in the morning by the mischief he has done. He reminds me of that fearful personage in the nursery rhyme:

"Who goes round the house at night?
None but bloody Tom?
Who steals all the sheep at night?
None but one by one!"

In short, Starlight Tom is the scapegoat of the neighborhood, but so cunning and adroit, that there is no detecting him. Old Christy and the gamekeeper have watched many a night in hopes of entrapping him; and Christy often patrols the park with his dogs for the purpose, but all in vain. It is said that the Squire winks hard at his misdeeds, having an indulgent feeling towards the vagabond, because of his being very expert at all kinds of game, a great shot with the cross-bow, and the best morris-dancer in the country.

The Squire also suffers the gang to lurk unmolested about the skirts of his estate, on condition they do not come about the house. The approaching wedding, however, has made a kind of Saturnalia at the Hall, and has caused a suspension of all sober rule. It has produced a great sensation throughout the female part of

the household; not a housemaid but dreams of wedding-favors, and has a husband running in her head. Such a time is a harvest for the gypsies; there is a public footpath leading across one part of the park, by which they have free ingress; and they are continually hovering about the grounds, telling the servant-girls' fortunes, or getting smuggled in to the young ladies.

I believe the Oxonian amuses himself very much by furnishing them with hints in private, and bewildering all the weak brains in the house with their wonderful revelations. The general was certainly very much astonished by the communications made to him the other evening by the gypsy girl: he kept a wary silence towards us on the subject, and affected to treat it lightly; but I have noticed that he has since redoubled his attentions to Lady Lillycraft and her dogs.

I have seen also Phœbe Wilkins, the housekeeper's pretty and lovesick niece, holding a long conference with one of these old sibyls behind a large tree in the avenue, and often looking round to see that she was not observed. I make no doubt she was endeavoring to get some favorable augury about the result of her love-quarrel with young Ready-Money, as oracles have always been more consulted on love-

affairs than upon any thing else. I fear, however, that in this instance the response was not so favorable as usual, for I perceived poor Phœbe returning pensively towards the house, her head hanging down, her hat in her hand, and the ribbon trailing along the ground.

At another time, as I turned a corner of a terrace, at the bottom of the garden, just by a clump of trees and a large stone urn, I came upon a bevy of the young girls of the family, attended by this same Phœbe Wilkins. I was at a loss to comprehend the meaning of their blushing and giggling, and their apparent agitation, until I saw the red cloak of a gypsy vanishing among the shrubbery. A few moments after I caught a sight of Master Simon and the Oxonian stealing along one of the walks of the garden, chuckling and laughing at their successful waggery; having evidently put the gypsy up to the thing, and instructed her what to say.

After all, there is something strangely pleasing in these tamperings with the future, even where we are convinced of the fallacy of the prediction. It is singular how willingly the mind will half deceive itself; and with a degree of awe we will listen even to these babblers about futurity. For my part, I cannot feel angry with these poor vagabonds, that seek to deceive us into bright hopes and expectations. I have

always been something of a castle-builder, and have found my liveliest pleasures to arise from the illusions which fancy has cast over commonplace realities. As I get on in life, I find it more difficult to deceive myself in this delightful manner; and I should be thankful to any prophet, however false, who would conjure the clouds which hang over futurity into palaces, and all its doubtful regions into fairy-land.

The Squire, who, as I have observed, has a private good-will towards gypsies, has suffered considerable annoyance on their account. Not that they requite his indulgence with ingratitude, for they do not depredate very flagrantly on his estate; but because their pilferings and misdeeds occasion loud murmurs in the village. I can readily understand the old gentleman's humor on this point; I have a great toleration for all kinds of vagrant, sunshiny existence, and must confess I take a pleasure in observing the ways of gypsies. The English, who are accustomed to them from childhood, and often suffer from their petty depredations, consider them as mere nuisances; but I have been very much struck with their peculiarities. I like to behold their clear olive complexions; their romantic black eyes; their raven locks; their lithe slender figures; and to hear them, in low silver tones, dealing forth magnificent promises of

honors and estates, of world's wealth, and ladies' love.

Their mode of life, too, has something in it very fanciful and picturesque. They are the free denizens of nature, and maintain a primitive independence, in spite of law and gospel, of county jails and country magistrates. It is curious to see this obstinate adherence to the wild, unsettled habits of savage life transmitted from generation to generation, and preserved in the midst of one of the most cultivated, populous, and systematic countries in the world. They are totally distinct from the busy, thrifty people about them. They seem to be, like the Indians of America, either above or below the ordinary cares and anxieties of mankind. Heedless of power, of honors, of wealth, and indifferent to the fluctuations of times, the rise or fall of grain, or stock, or empires, they seem to laugh at the toiling, fretting world around them, and to live according to the philosophy of the old song:

"Who would ambition shun,
And loves to lie i' the sun,
Seeking the food he eats,
And pleased with what he gets,
Come hither, come hither, come hither.
Here shall he see
No enemy,
But winter and rough weather."

In this way they wander from county to county, keeping about the purlieus of villages, or in plenteous neighborhoods, where there are fat farms and rich country-seats. Their encampments are generally made in some beautiful spot: either a green shady nook of a road, or on the border of a common, under a sheltering hedge; or on the skirts of a fine spreading wood. They are always to be found lurking about fairs, and races, and rustic gatherings, wherever there is pleasure, and throng, and idleness. They are the oracles of milkmaids and simple serving-girls; and sometimes have even the honor of perusing the white hands of gentlemen's daughters, when rambling about their fathers' grounds. They are the bane of good housewives and thrifty farmers, and odious in the eyes of country justices; but, like all other vagabond beings, they have something to commend them to the fancy. They are among the last traces, in these matter-of-fact days, of the motley population of former times; and are whimsically associated in my mind with fairies and witches, Robin Good Fellow, Robin Hood, and the other fantastical personages of poetry.

MAY-DAY CUSTOMS.

Happy the age, and harmless were the dayes,
(For then true love and amity was found,)
When every village did a May-pole raise,
And Whitson ales and May games did abound,
And all the lusty yonkers in a rout,
With merry lasses daunc'd the rod about,
Then friendship to their banquets bid the guests,
And poore men far'd the better for their feasts.

PASQUIL'S PALINODIA.

THE month of April has nearly passed away, and we are fast approaching that poetical day, which was considered, in old times, as the boundary that parted the frontiers of winter and summer. With all its caprices, however, I like the month of April. I like these laughing and crying days, when sun and shade seem to run in billows over the landscape. I like to see the sudden shower coursing over the meadow, and giving all nature a greener smile; and the bright sunbeams chasing the flying cloud, and turning all its drops into diamonds.

I was enjoying a morning of the kind in company with the Squire in one of the finest parts

of the park. We were skirting a beautiful grove, and he was giving me a kind of biographical account of several of his favorite forest-trees, when he heard the strokes of an axe from the midst of a thick copse. The Squire paused and listened, with manifest signs of uneasiness. He turned his steps in the direction of the sound. The strokes grew louder and louder as we advanced; there was evidently a vigorous arm wielding the axe. The Squire quickened his pace, but in vain; a loud crack and a succeeding crash told that the mischief had been done, and some child of the forest laid low. When we came to the place, we found Master Simon and several others standing about a tall and beautifully straight young tree, which had just been felled.

The Squire, though a man of most harmonious dispositions, was completely put out of tune by this circumstance. He felt like a monarch witnessing the murder of one of his liege subjects, and demanded, with some asperity, the meaning of the outrage. It turned out to be an affair of Master Simon's, who had selected the tree, from its height and straightness, for a May-pole, the old one which stood on the village-green being unfit for further service. If any thing could have soothed the ire of my worthy host, it would have been the reflection

that his tree had fallen in so good a cause; and I saw that there was a great struggle between his fondness for his groves and his devotion to May-day. He could not contemplate the prostrate tree, however, without indulging in lamentation, and making a kind of funeral eulogy, like Marc Antony over the body of Cæsar; and he forbade that any tree should thenceforward be cut down on his estate without a warrant from himself; being determined, he said, to hold the sovereign power of life and death in his own hands.

This mention of the May-pole struck my attention, and I inquired whether the old customs connected with it were really kept up in this part of the country. The Squire shook his head mournfully; and I found I had touched on one of his tender points, for he grew quite melancholy in bewailing the total decline of old May-day. Though it is regularly celebrated in the neighboring village, yet it has been merely resuscitated by the worthy Squire, and is kept up in a forced state of existence at his expense. He meets with continual discouragements; and finds great difficulty in getting the country bumpkins to play their parts tolerably. He manages to have every year a "Queen of the May"; but as to Robin Hood, Friar Tuck, the Dragon, the Hobby Horse, and all the other

motley crew that used to enliven the day with their mummery, he has not ventured to introduce them.

Still I look forward with some interest to the promised shadow of old May-day, even though it be but a shadow; and I feel more and more pleased with the whimsical yet harmless hobby of my host, which is surrounding him with agreeable associations, and making a little world of poetry about him. Brought up, as I have been, in a new country, I may appreciate too highly the faint vestiges of ancient customs which I now and then meet with, and the interest I express in them may provoke a smile from those who are negligently suffering them to pass away. But with whatever indifference they may be regarded by those "to the manner born," yet in my mind the lingering flavor of them imparts a charm to rustic life, which nothing else could readily supply.

I shall never forget the delight I felt on first seeing a May-pole. It was on the banks of the Dee, close by the picturesque old bridge that stretches across the river, from the quaint little city of Chester. I had already been carried back into former days by the antiquities of that venerable place; the examination of which is equal to turning over the pages of a black-letter volume, or gazing on the pictures in Frois-

sart. The May-pole on the margin of that poetic stream completed the illusion. My fancy adorned it with wreaths of flowers, and peopled the green bank with all the dancing revelry of May-day. The mere sight of this May-pole gave a glow to my feelings, and spread a charm over the country for the rest of the day; and as I traversed a part of the fair plain of Cheshire, and the beautiful borders of Wales, and looked from among swelling hills, down a long green valley, through which "the Deva wound its wizard stream," my imagination turned all into a perfect Arcadia.

Whether it be owing to such poetical associations early instilled into my mind, or whether there is a sympathetic revival and budding forth of the feelings at this season, certain it is, that I always experience, wherever I may be placed, a delightful expansion of the heart at the return of May. It is said that birds about this time will become restless in their cages, as if instinct with the season, conscious of the revelry going on in the groves, and impatient to break from their bondage and join in the jubilee of the year. In like manner I have felt myself excited, even in the midst of the metropolis, when the windows, which had been churlishly closed all winter, were again thrown open to receive the balmy breath of May; when the

sweets of the country were breathed into the town, and flowers were cried about the streets. I have considered the treasures of flowers thus poured in, as so many missives from nature inviting us forth to enjoy the virgin beauty of the year, before its freshness is exhaled by the heats of sunny summer.

One can readily imagine what a gay scene it must have been in jolly old London, when the doors were decorated with flowering branches, when every hat was decked with hawthorn, and Robin Hood, Friar Tuck, Maid Marian, the morris-dancers, and all the other fantastic masks and revellers, were performing their antics about the May-pole in every part of the city.

I am not a bigoted admirer of old times and old customs merely because of their antiquity; but while I rejoice in the decline of many of the rude usages and coarse amusements of former days, I regret that this innocent and fanciful festival has fallen into disuse. It seemed appropriate to this verdant and pastoral country, and calculated to light up the too pervading gravity of the nation. I value every custom which tends to infuse poetical feeling into the common people, and to sweeten and soften the rudeness of rustic manners, without destroying their simplicity. Indeed, it is to the decline of

this happy simplicity that the decline of this custom may be traced, and the rural dance on the green, and the homely May-day pageant, have gradually disappeared, in proportion as the peasantry have become expensive and artificial in their pleasures, and too knowing for simple enjoyment.

Some attempts, the Squire informs me, have been made of late years, by men of both taste and learning, to rally back the popular feeling to these standards of primitive simplicity; but the time has gone by, the feeling has become chilled by habits of gain and traffic; the country apes the manners and amusements of the town, and little is heard of May-day at present, except from the lamentations of authors, who sigh after it from among the brick walls of the city:

"For O, for O, the Hobby Horse is forgot."

VILLAGE WORTHIES.

Nay, I tell you, I am so well beloved in our town, that not the worst dog in the street will hurt my little finger.
COLLIER OF CROYDON.

AS the neighboring village is one of those out-of-the-way, but gossiping little places where a small matter makes a great stir, it is not to be supposed that the approach of a festival like that of May-day can be regarded with indifference, especially since it is made a matter of such moment by the great folks at the Hall. Master Simon, who is the faithful factotum of the worthy Squire, and jumps with his humor in every thing, is frequent just now in his visits to the village, to give directions for the impending fête; and as I have taken the liberty occasionally of accompanying him, I have been enabled to get some insight into the characters and internal politics of this very sagacious little community.

Master Simon is in fact the Cæsar of the village. It is true the Squire is the protecting

power, but his factotum is the active and busy agent. He intermeddles in all its concerns; is acquainted with all the inhabitants and their domestic history; gives counsel to the old folks in their business matters, and the young folks in their love affairs; and enjoys the proud satisfaction of being a great man in a little world.

He is the dispenser, too, of the Squire's charity, which is bounteous; and, to do Master Simon justice, he performs this part of his functions with great alacrity. Indeed, I have been entertained with the mixture of bustle, importance, and kind-heartedness which he displays. He is of too vivacious a temperament to comfort the afflicted by sitting down moping and whining and blowing noses in concert, but goes whisking about like a sparrow, chirping consolation into every hole and corner of the village. I have seen an old woman, in a red cloak, hold him for half an hour together with some long phthisical story of distress, which Master Simon listened to with many a bob of the head, smack of his dog-whip, and other symptoms of impatience, though he afterwards made a most faithful and circumstantial report of the case to the Squire. I have watched him, too, during one of his pop visits into the cottage of a superannuated villager, who is a pensioner of the Squire, where he fidgeted about

the room without sitting down, made many excellent off-hand reflections with the old invalid, who was propped up in his chair, about the shortness of life, the certainty of death, and the necessity of preparing for "that awful change," quoted several texts of Scripture very incorrectly, but much to the edification of the cottager's wife; and on coming out, pinched the daughter's rosy cheek, and wondered what was in the young men that such a pretty face did not get a husband.

He has also his cabinet counsellors in the village, with whom he is very busy just now preparing for the May-day ceremonies. Among these is the village tailor, a pale-faced fellow, who plays the clarinet in the church-choir; and, being a great musical genius, has frequent meetings of the band at his house, where they "make night hideous" by their concerts. He is, in consequence, high in favor with Master Simon; and, through his influence, has the making, or rather marring, of all the liveries of the Hall; which generally look as though they had been cut out by one of those scientific tailors of the Flying Island of Laputa, who took measure of their customers with a quadrant. The tailor, in fact, might rise to be one of the moneyed men of the village, was he not rather too prone to gossip, and keep holidays, and give concerts, and blow all his substance, real and

personal, through his clarinet; which literally keeps him poor both in body and estate. He has for the present thrown by all his regular work, and suffered the breeches of the village to go unmade and unmended, while he is occupied in making garlands of party-colored rags, in imitation of flowers, for the decoration of the May-pole.

Another of Master Simon's counsellors is the apothecary, a short and rather fat man, with a pair of prominent eyes, that diverge like those of a lobster. He is the village wise man; very sententious, and full of profound remarks on shallow subjects. Master Simon often quotes his sayings, and mentions him as rather an extraordinary man; and even consults him occasionally in desperate cases of the dogs and horses. Indeed, he seems to have been overwhelmed by the apothecary's philosophy, which is exactly one observation deep, consisting of indisputable maxims such as may be gathered from the mottos of tobacco-boxes. I had a specimen of his philosophy in my very first conversation with him; in the course of which he observed, with great solemnity and emphasis, that "man is a compound of wisdom and folly"; upon which Master Simon, who had hold of my arm, pressed very hard upon it, and whispered in my ear: "That 's a devilish shrewd remark."

THE SCHOOLMASTER.

There will no mosse stick to the stone of Sisiphus, no grasse hang on the heeles of Mercury, no butter cleave on the bread of a traveller. For as the eagle at every flight loseth a feather, which maketh her bauld in her age, so the traveller in every country loseth some fleece, which maketh him a beggar in his youth, by buying that for a pound which he cannot sell again for a penny —repentance.—LILLY'S EUPHUES.

AMONG the worthies of the village, that enjoy the peculiar confidence of Master Simon, is one who has struck my fancy so much that I have thought him worthy of a separate notice. It is Slingsby, the schoolmaster, a thin elderly man, rather threadbare and slovenly, somewhat indolent in manner, and with an easy, good-humored look, not often met with in his craft. I have been interested in his favor by a few anecdotes which I have picked up concerning him.

He is a native of the village, and was a contemporary and playmate of Ready-Money Jack in the days of their boyhood. Indeed, they carried on a kind of league of mutual good offices. Slingsby was rather puny, and withal

somewhat of a coward, but very apt at his learning: Jack, on the contrary, was a bully-boy out of doors, but a sad laggard at his books. Slingsby helped Jack, therefore, to all his lessons; Jack fought all Slingsby's battles; and they were inseparable friends. This mutual kindness continued even after they left the school, notwithstanding the dissimilarity of their characters. Jack took to ploughing and reaping, and prepared himself to till his paternal acres; while the other loitered negligently on in the path of learning, until he penetrated even into the confines of Latin and mathematics.

In an unlucky hour, however, he took to reading voyages and travels, and was smitten with a desire to see the world. This desire increased upon him as he grew up; so, early one bright sunny morning, he put all his effects in a knapsack, slung it on his back, took staff in hand, and called in his way to take leave of his early schoolmate. Jack was just going out with the plough: the friends shook hands over the farmhouse gate; Jack drove his team a-field, and Slingsby whistled "Over the hills and far away," and sallied forth gayly to "seek his fortune."

Years and years passed away, and young Tom Slingsby was forgotten; when, one mellow Sunday afternoon in autumn, a thin man, somewhat

advanced in life, with a coat out at elbows, a pair of old nankeen gaiters, and a few things tied in a handkerchief, and slung on the end of a stick, was seen loitering through the village. He appeared to regard several houses attentively, to peer into the windows that were open, to eye the villagers wistfully as they returned from church, and then to pass some time in the churchyard reading the tombstones.

At length he found his way to the farm-house of Ready-Money Jack, but paused ere he attempted the wicket; contemplating the picture of substantial independence before him. In the porch of the house sat Ready-Money Jack, in his Sunday dress; with his hat upon his head, his pipe in his mouth, and his tankard before him, the monarch of all he surveyed. Beside him lay his fat house-dog. The varied sounds of poultry were heard from the well-stocked farm-yard; the bees hummed from their hives in the garden; the cattle lowed in the rich meadow; while the crammed barns and ample stacks bore proof of an abundant harvest.

The stranger opened the gate and advanced dubiously toward the house. The mastiff growled at the sight of the suspicious-loooking intruder, but was immediately silenced by his master, who, taking his pipe from his mouth, awaited with inquiring aspect the address of

this equivocal personage. The stranger eyed old Jack for a moment, so portly in his dimensions, and decked out in gorgeous apparel; then cast a glance upon his own threadbare and starveling condition, and the scanty bundle which he held in his hand; then giving his shrunk waistcoat a twitch to make it meet its receding waistband, and casting another look, half sad, half humorous, at the sturdy yeoman, "I suppose," said he, "Mr. Tibbets, you have forgot old times and old playmates."

The latter gazed at him with scrutinizing look, but acknowledged that he had no recollection of him.

"Like enough, like enough," said the stranger; "everybody seems to have forgotten poor Slingsby!"

"Why no, sure! it can't be Tom Slingsby!"

"Yes, but it is though!" replied the stranger, shaking his head.

Ready-Money Jack was on his feet in a twinkling, thrust out his hand, gave his ancient crony the grip of a giant, and slapping the other hand on a bench, "Sit down there," cried he, "Tom Slingsby!"

A long conversation ensued about old times, while Slingsby was regaled with the best cheer that the farm-house afforded; for he was hungry as well as way-worn, and had the keen appetite

of a poor pedestrian. The early playmates then talked over their subsequent lives and adventures. Jack had but little to relate, and was never good at a long story. A prosperous life, passed at home, has little incident for narrative; it is only poor devils, that are tossed about the world, that are the true heroes of story. Jack had stuck by the paternal farm, followed the same plough that his forefathers had driven, and had waxed richer and richer as he grew older. As to Tom Slingsby, he was an exemplification of the old proverb, "a rolling stone gathers no moss." He had sought his fortune about the world, without ever finding it; being a thing oftener found at home than abroad. He had been in all kinds of situations, and had learnt a dozen different modes of making a living; but had found his way back to his native village rather poorer than when he left it, his knapsack having dwindled down to a scanty bundle.

As luck would have it, the Squire was passing by the farm-house that very evening, and called there, as is often his custom. He found the two schoolmates still gossiping in the porch, and, according to the good old Scottish song, "taking a cup of kindness yet, for auld lang syne." The Squire was struck by the contrast in appearance and fortunes of these early playmates.

Ready-Money Jack, seated in lordly state, surrounded by the good things of this life, with golden guineas hanging to his very watch-chain; and the poor pilgrim Slingsby, thin as a weasel, with all his worldly effects, his bundle, hat, and walking-staff, lying on the ground beside him.

The good Squire's heart warmed towards the luckless cosmopolite, for he is a little prone to like such half-vagrant characters. He cast about in his mind how he should contrive once more to anchor Slingsby in his native village. Honest Jack had already offered him a present shelter under his roof, in spite of the hints, and winks, and half remonstrances of the shrewd Dame Tibbets; but how to provide for his permanent maintenance, was the question. Luckily, the Squire bethought himself that the village school was without a teacher. A little further conversation convinced him that Slingsby was as fit for that as for any thing else, and in a day or two he was seen swaying the rod of empire in the very schoolhouse where he had often been horsed in the days of his boyhood.

Here he has remained for several years, and, being honored by the countenance of the Squire, and the fast friendship of Mr. Tibbets, he has grown into much importance and consideration

in the village. I am told, however, that he still shows, now and then, a degree of restlessness, and a disposition to rove abroad again, and see a little more of the world,—an inclination which seems particularly to haunt him about spring-time. There is nothing so difficult to conquer as the vagrant humor, when once it has been fully indulged.

Since I have heard these anecdotes of poor Slingsby, I have more than once mused upon the picture presented by him and his schoolmate Ready-Money Jack, on their coming together again after so long a separation. It is difficult to determine between lots in life, where each is attended with its peculiar discontents. He who never leaves his home, repines at his monotonous existence, and envies the traveller, whose life is a constant tissue of wonder and adventure; while he who is tossed about the world looks back with many a sigh to the safe and quiet shore which he has abandoned. I cannot help thinking, however, that the man who stays at home, and cultivates the comforts and pleasures daily springing up around him, stands the best chance for happiness. There is nothing so fascinating to a young mind as the idea of travelling; and there is very witchcraft in the old phrase found in every nursery tale, of "going to seek one's fortune." A continual

change of place, and change of object, promises a continual succession of adventure and gratification of curiosity. But there is a limit to all our enjoyments, and every desire bears its death in its very gratification. Curiosity languishes under repeated stimulants; novelties cease to excite surprise; until at length we cannot wonder even at a miracle.

He who has sallied forth into the world, like poor Slingsby, full of sunny anticipations, finds too soon how different the distant scene becomes when visited. The smooth place roughens as he approaches; the wild place becomes tame and barren; the fairy tints which beguiled him on, still fly to the distant hill, or gather upon the land he has left behind; and every part of the landscape seems greener than the spot he stands on.

THE SCHOOL.

But to come down from great men and higher matters to my little children and poor schoolhouse again; I will, God willing, go forward orderly, as I purposed, to instruct poor children and young men both for learning and manners.—ROGER ASCHAM.

HAVING given the reader a slight sketch of the village schoolmaster, he may be curious to learn something concerning his school. As the Squire takes much interest in the education of the neighboring children, he put into the hands of the teacher, on first installing him in office, a copy of Roger Ascham's "Schoolmaster," and advised him, moreover, to con over that portion of old Peachem which treats of the duty of masters, and which condemns the favorite method of making boys wise by flagellation.

He exhorted Slingsby not to break down or depress the free spirit of the boys by harshness and slavish fear, but to lead them freely and joyously on in the path of knowledge, making

it pleasant and desirable in their eyes. He wished to see the youth trained up in the manners and habitudes of the peasantry of the good old times, and thus to lay a foundation for the accomplishment of his favorite object, the revival of old English customs and character. He recommended that all the ancient holidays should be observed, and the sports of the boys, in their hours of play, regulated according to the standard authorities laid down in Strutt; a copy of whose invaluable work, decorated with plates, was deposited in the schoolhouse. Above all, he exhorted the pedagogue to abstain from the use of birch, an instrument of instruction which the good Squire regards as fit only for the coercion of brute natures, that cannot be reasoned with.

Mr. Slingsby has followed the Squire's instructions to the best of his disposition and ability. He never flogs the boys, because he is too easy, good-humored a creature to inflict pain on a worm. He is bountiful in holidays, because he loves holidays himself, and has a sympathy with the urchins' impatience of confinement, from having divers times experienced its irksomeness during the time that he was seeing the world. As to sports and pastimes, the boys are faithfully exercised in all that are

on record: quoits, races, prison-bars, tip-cat, trap-ball, bandy-ball, wrestling, leaping, and what not. The only misfortune is, that, having banished the birch, honest Slingsby has not studied Roger Ascham sufficiently to find out a substitute, or, rather, he has not the management in his nature to apply one; his school, therefore, though one of the happiest, is one of the most unruly in the country; and never was a pedagogue more liked, or less heeded, by his disciples than Slingsby.

He has lately taken a coadjutor worthy of himself, being another stray sheep returned to the village fold. This is no other than the son of the musical tailor, who had bestowed some cost upon his education, hoping one day to see him arrive at the dignity of an exciseman, or at least of a parish clerk. The lad grew up, however, as idle and musical as his father; and, being captivated by the drum and fife of a recruiting party, followed them off to the army. He returned not long since, out of money, and out at elbows, the prodigal son of the village. He remained for some time lounging about the place in half-tattered soldier's dress, with a foraging cap on one side of his head, jerking stones across the brook, or loitering about the tavern door, a burden to his father, and regarded with great coldness by all warm householders.

Something, however, drew honest Slingsby towards the youth. It might be the kindness he bore to his father, who is one of the schoolmaster's great cronies ; it might be that secret sympathy which draws men of vagrant propensities toward each other, for there is something truly magnetic in the vagabond feeling ; or it might be that he remembered the time when he himself had come back like this youngster, a wreck to his native place. At any rate, whatever the motive, Slingsby drew towards the youth. They had many conversations in the village tap-room about foreign parts, and the various scenes and places they had witnessed during their wayfaring about the world. The more Slingsby talked with him, the more he found him to his taste ; and finding him almost as learned as himself, he forthwith engaged him as an assistant, or usher, in the school.

Under such admirable tuition, the school, as may be supposed, flourishes apace ; and if the scholars do not become versed in all the holiday accomplishments of the good old times, to the Squire's heart's content, it will not be the fault of their teachers. The prodigal son has become almost as popular among the boys as the pedagogue himself. His instructions are not limited to school hours ; and having inherited the musical taste and talents of his father, he has

bitten the whole school with the mania. He is a great hand at beating a drum, which is often heard rumbling from the rear of the school-house. He is teaching half the boys of the village, also, to play the fife, and the pandean pipes; and they weary the whole neighborhood with their vague pipings, as they sit perched on stiles, or loitering about the barn-doors in the evenings. Among the other exercises of the school, also, he has introduced the ancient art of archery, one of the Squire's favorite themes, with such success, that the whipsters roam in truant bands about the neighborhood, practising with their bows and arrows upon the birds of the air, and the beasts of the field; and not unfrequently making a foray into the Squire's domains, to the great indignation of the game-keepers. In a word, so completely are the ancient English customs and habits cultivated at this school, that I should not be surprised if the Squire should live to see one of his poetic visions realized, and a brood reared up, worthy successors to Robin Hood and his merry gang of outlaws.

THE VILLAGE POLITICIAN.

I am a rogue if I do not think I was designed for the helm of state; I am so full of nimble stratagems that I should have ordered affairs, and carried it against the stream of a faction, with as much ease as a skipper would laver against the wind.—THE GOBLINS.

IN one of my visits to the village with Master Simon, he proposed that we should stop at the inn, which he wished to show me, as a specimen of a real country inn, the headquarters of village gossip. I had remarked it before, in my perambulations about the place. It has a deep old-fashioned porch, leading into a large hall, which serves for tap-room and travellers'-room; having a wide fireplace, with high-backed settles on each side, where the wise men of the village gossip over their ale, and hold their sessions during the long winter evenings. The landlord is an easy, indolent fellow, shaped a little like one of his own beer-barrels, and is apt to stand gossiping at his own door, with his wig on one side, and his hands in his pockets, whilst his wife and daughter attend to customers. His wife, however, is fully com-

petent to manage the establishment; and, indeed, from long habitude, rules over all the frequenters of the tap-room as completely as if they were her dependents and not her patrons. Not a veteran ale-bibber but pays homage to her, having, no doubt, often been in her arrears. I have already hinted that she is on very good terms with Ready-Money Jack. He was a sweetheart of hers in early life, and has always countenanced the tavern on her account. Indeed, he is quite a "cock of the walk" at the tap-room.

As we approached the inn, we heard some one talking with great volubility, and distinguished the ominous words, "taxes," "poor-rates," and "agricultural distress." It proved to be a thin, loquacious fellow, who had penned the landlord up in one corner of the porch, with his hands in his pockets, listening with an air of the most vacant acquiescence.

The sight seemed to have a curious effect on Master Simon, as he squeezed my arm, and altering his course, sheered wide of the porch, as though he had not had any idea of entering. This evident evasion induced me to notice the orator more particularly. He was meagre, but active in his make, with a long, pale, bilious face; a black beard, so ill-shaven, as to leave marks of blood on his shirt-collar; a feverish

eye, and a hat sharpened up at the sides into a most pragmatical shape. He had a newspaper in his hand, and seemed to be commenting on its contents, to the thorough conviction of mine host.

At sight of Master Simon the landlord was evidently a little flurried, and began to rub his hands, edge away from his corner, and make several profound publican bows; while the orator took no other notice of my companion than to talk rather louder than before, and with, as I thought, something of an air of defiance. Master Simon, however, as I have before said, sheered off from the porch, and passed on, pressing my arm within his, and whispering as we got by, in a tone of awe and horror, "That 's a Radical! he reads Cobbett!"

I endeavored to get a more particular account of him from my companion, but he seemed unwilling even to talk about him, answering only in general terms, that he was "a cursed busy fellow, that had a confounded trick of talking, and was apt to bother one about the national debt, and such nonsence"; from which I suspected that Master Simon had been rendered wary of him by some accidental encounter on the field of argument; for these radicals are continually roving about in quest of

wordy warfare, and never so happy as when they can tilt a gentleman logician out of his saddle.

On subsequent inquiry my suspicions have been confirmed. I find the radical has but recently found his way into the village, where he threatens to commit fearful devastation with his doctrines. He has already made two or three complete converts, or new lights; has shaken the faith of several others; and has grievously puzzled the brains of many of the oldest villagers, who had never thought about politics, nor scarce any thing else, during their whole lives.

He is lean and meagre from the constant restlessness of mind and body; worrying about with newspapers and pamphlets in his pockets, which he is ready to pull out on all occasions. He has shocked several of the stanchest villagers, by talking lightly of the Squire and his family; and hinting that it would be better the park should be cut up into small farms and kitchen-gardens, or feed good mutton instead of worthless deer.

He is a great thorn in the sight of the Squire, who is sadly afraid that he will introduce politics into the village, and turn it into an unhappy, thinking community. He is a still greater grievance to Master Simon, who has hitherto been

able to sway the political opinions of the place, without much cost of learning or logic; but has been much puzzled of late to weed out the doubts and heresies already sown by this champion of reform. Indeed, the latter has taken complete command at the tap-room of the tavern, not so much because he has convinced, as because he has out-talked all the old-established oracles. The apothecary, with all his philosophy, was as naught before him. He has convinced and converted the landlord at least a dozen times; who, however, is liable to be convinced and converted the other way by the next person with whom he talks. It is true the radical has a violent antagonist in the landlady, who is vehemently loyal, and thoroughly devoted to the King, Master Simon, and the Squire. She now and then comes out upon the reformer with all the fierceness of a cat-o'-mountain, and does not spare her own soft-headed husband for listening to what she terms such "low-lived politics." What makes the good woman the more violent, is the perfect coolness with which the radical listens to her attacks, drawing his face up into a provoking, supercilious smile; and when she has talked herself out of breath, quietly asking her for a taste of her home-brewed.

The only person in any way a match for this

redoubtable politician is Ready-Money Jack Tibbets; who maintains his stand in the tap-room, in defiance of the radical and all his works. Jack is one of the most loyal men in the country, without being able to reason about the matter. He has that admirable quality for a tough arguer, also, that he never knows when he is beat. He has half a dozen old maxims, which he advances on all occasions, and though his antagonist may overturn them ever so often, yet he always brings them anew to the field. He is like the robber in Ariosto, who, though his head might be cut off half a hundred times, yet whipped it on his shoulders again in a twinkling, and returned as sound a man as ever to the charge.

Whatever does not square with Jack's simple and obvious creed, he sets down for "French politics"; for, notwithstanding the peace, he cannot be persuaded that the French are not still laying plots to ruin the nation, and to get hold of the Bank of England. The radical attempted to overwhelm him one day by a long passage from a newspaper; but Jack neither reads nor believes in newspaperss. In reply, he gave him one of the stanzas which he has by heart from his favorite, and indeed only author, old Tusser, and which he calls his Golden Rules:

"Leave princes' affairs undescanted on,
And tend to such doings as stand thee upon;
Fear God, and offend not the king nor his laws,
And keep thyself out of the magistrate's claws."

When Tibbets had pronounced this with great emphasis, he pulled out a well-filled leathern purse, took out a handful of gold and silver, paid his score at the bar with great punctuality, returned his money, piece by piece, into his purse, his purse into his pocket, which he buttoned up; and then, giving his cudgel a stout thump upon the floor, and bidding the radical "good morning, sir!" with the tone of a man who conceives he has completely done for his antagonist, he walked with lionlike gravity out of the house. Two or three of Jack's admirers who were present, and had been afraid to take the field themselves, looked upon this as a perfect triumph, and winked at each other when the radical's back was turned. "Ay, ay!" said mine host, as soon as the radical was out of hearing, "let old Jack alone; I 'll warrant he 'll give him his own!"

THE ROOKERY.

But cawing rooks, and Kites that swim sublime
In still repeated circles ; screaming loud,
The jay, the pie, and e'en the boding owl,
That hails the rising moon, have charms for me.
COWPER.

IN a grove of tall oaks and beeches, that crowns a terrace-walk, just on the skirts of the garden, is an ancient rookery ; which is one of the most important provinces in the Squire's rural domains. The old gentleman sets great store by his rooks, and will not suffer one of them to be killed ; in consequence of which they have increased amazingly. The tree-tops are loaded with their nests ; they have encroached upon the great avenue, and even established in times long past a colony among the elms and pines of the churchyard, which, like other distant colonies, has already thrown off allegiance to the mother-country.

The rooks are looked upon by the Squire as a very ancient and honorable line of gentry,

highly aristocratical in their notions, fond of place, and attached to church and state; as their building so loftily, keeping about churches and cathedrals, and in the venerable groves of old castles and manor-houses, sufficiently manifests. The good opinion thus expressed by the Squire put me upon observing more narrowly these very respectable birds; for I confess, to my shame, I had been apt to confound them with their cousins-german the crows, to whom, at the first glance, they bear so great a family resemblance. Nothing, it seems, could be more unjust or injurious than such a mistake. The rooks and crows are, among the feathered tribes, what the Spaniards and Portuguese are among nations,—the least-loving, in consequence of their neighborhood and similarity. The rooks are old-established housekeepers, high-minded, gentlefolk, who have had their hereditary abodes time out of mind; but as to the poor crows, they are a kind of vagabond, predatory, gypsy race, roving about the country without any settled home; "their hands are against everybody, and everybody's against them," and they are gibbeted in every cornfield. Master Simon assures me that a female rook, who should so far forget herself as to consort with a crow, would inevitably be disinherited, and indeed would be totally discarded by all her genteel acquaintances.

The Squire is very watchful over the interests and concerns of his sable neighbors. As to Master Simon, he even pretends to know many of them by sight, and to have given names to them; he points out several, which he says are old heads of families, and compares them to worthy old citizens, beforehand in the world, that wear cocked hats, and silver buckles in their shoes. Notwithstanding the protecting benevolence of the Squire, and their being residents in his empire, they seem to acknowledge no allegiance, and to hold no intercourse or intimacy. Their airy tenements are built almost out of the reach of gunshot, and notwithstanding their vicinity to the Hall, they maintain a most reserved and distrustful shyness of mankind.

There is one season of the year, however, which brings all birds in a manner to a level, and tames the pride of the loftiest high-flier, which is the season of building their nests. This takes place early in the spring, when the forest-trees first begin to show their buds, and the long, withy ends of the branches to turn green; when the wild strawberry and other herbage of the sheltered woodlands put forth their tender and tinted leaves; and the daisy and the primrose peep from under the hedges. At this time there is a general bustle among

the feathered tribes; an incessant fluttering about, and a cheerful chirping; indicative, like the germanation of the vegetable world, of the reviving life and fecundity of the year.

It is then that the rooks forget their usual stateliness, and their shy and lofty habits. Instead of keeping up in the high regions of the air, swinging on the breezy tree-tops, and looking down with sovereign contempt upon the humble crawlers upon earth, they are fain to throw off for a time the dignity of the gentleman, to come down to the ground, aud put on the painstaking and industrious character of a laborer. They now lose their natural shyness, become fearless and familiar, and may be seen plying about in all directions, with an air of great assiduity, in search of building-materials. Every now and then your path will be crossed by one of these busy old gentlemen, worrying about with awkward gait, as if troubled with the gout, or with corns on his toes; casting about many a prying look; turning down first one eye, then the other, in earnest consideration, upon every straw he meets with; until, espying some mighty twig, large enough to make a rafter for his air-castle, he will seize upon it with avidity, and hurry away with it to the tree-top; fearing, apparently, lest you should dispute with him the invaluable prize.

Like other castle-builders, these airy architects seem rather fanciful in the materials with which they build, and to like those most which come from a distance. Thus, though there are abundance of dry twigs on the surrounding trees, yet they never think of making use of them, but go foraging in distant lands, and come sailing home one by one, from the ends of the earth, each bearing in his bill some precious piece of timber.

Nor must I avoid mentioning, what, I grieve to say, rather derogates from the grave and honorable character of these ancient gentlefolk: that, during the architectural season, they are subject to great dissensions among themselves; that they make no scruple to defraud and plunder each other; and that sometimes the rookery is a scene of hideous brawl and commotion, in consequence of some delinquency of the kind. One of the partners generally remains on the nest to guard it from depredation; and I have seen severe contests, when some sly neighbor has endeavored to filch away a tempting rafter that had captivated his eye. As I am not willing hastily to admit any suspicion derogatory to the general character of so worshipful a people, I am inclined to think these larcenies discountenanced by the higher classes, and even rigorously punished by those in authority; for

I have now and then seen a whole gang of rooks fall upon the nest of some individual, pull it all to pieces, carry off the spoils, and even buffet the luckless proprietor. I have concluded this to be a signal punishment inflicted upon him, by the officers of the police, for some pilfering misdemeanor; or, perhaps, that it was a crew of bailiffs carrying an execution into his house.

I have been amused with another of their movements during the building-season. The steward has suffered a considerable number of sheep to graze on a lawn near the house, somewhat to the annoyance of the Squire, who thinks this an innovation on the dignity of a park, which ought to be devoted to deer only. Be this as it may, there is a green knoll, not far from the drawing-room window, where the ewes and lambs are accustomed to assemble towards evening, for the benefit of the setting sun. No sooner were they gathered here, at the time when these politic birds were building, than a stately old rook, who Master Simon assured me was the chief magistrate of this community, would settle down upon the head of one of the ewes, who, seeming conscious of this condescension, would desist from grazing, and stand fixed in motionless reverence of her august burden; the rest of the rookery

would then come wheeling down, in imitation of their leader, until every ewe had two or three of them cawing and fluttering and battling upon her back. Whether they requited the submission of the sheep by levying a contribution upon their fleece for the benefit of the rookery, I am not certain: though I presume they followed the usual custom of protecting powers.

The latter part of May is the time of great tribulation among the rockeries, when the young are just able to leave the nests, and balance themselves on the neighboring branches. Now comes on the season of "rook-shooting," —a terrible slaughter of the innocents. The Squire, of course, prohibits all invasion of the kind on his territories; but I am told that a lamentable havoc takes place in the colony about the old church. Upon this devoted commonwealth the village charges "with all its chivalry." Every idle wight, lucky enough to possess an old gun or blunderbuss, together with all the archery of Slingsby's school, takes the field on the occasion. In vain does the little parson interfere, or remonstrate in angry tones, from his study-window that looks into the churchyard; there is a continual popping from morning till night. Being no great marksmen, their shots are not often effective; but every now and then a great shout from the be-

sieging army of bumpkins makes known the downfall of some unlucky squab rook, which comes to the ground with the emphasis of a squashed apple-dumpling.

Nor is the rookery entirely free from other troubles and disasters. In so aristocratical and lofty-minded a community, which boasts so much ancient blood and hereditary pride, it is natural to suppose that questions of etiquette will sometimes arise, and affairs of honor ensue. In fact, this is very often the case ; bitter quarrels break out between individuals, which produce sad scufflings on the tree-tops, and I have more than once seen a regular duel between two doughty heroes of the rookery. Their field of battle is generally the air ; and their contest is managed in the most scientific and elegant manner ; wheeling round and round each other, and towering higher and higher, to get the vantage-ground, until they sometimes disappeared in the clouds before the combat is determined.

They have also fierce combats now and then with an invading hawk, and will drive him off from their territories by a *posse comitatus*. They are also extremely tenacious of their domains, and will suffer no other bird to inhabit the grove or its vicinity. A very ancient and respectable old-bachelor owl had for a long

time his lodgings in a corner of the grove, but has been fairly ejected by the rooks; and has retired, disgusted with the world, to a neighboring wood, where he leads the life of a hermit, and makes nightly complaints of his ill treatment.

The hootings of this unhappy gentleman may generally he heard in the still evenings, when the rooks are all at rest; and I have often listened to them, of a moonlight night, with a kind of mysterious gratification. This gray-bearded misanthrope, of course, is highly respected by the Squire; but the servants have superstitious notions about him; and it would be difficult to get the dairy-maid to venture after dark near to the wood which he inhabits.

Besides the private quarrels of the rooks, there are other misfortunes to which they are liable, and which often bring distress into the most respectable families of the rookery. Having the true baronial spirit of the good old feudal times, they are apt now and then to issue forth from their castles on a foray, and lay the plebeian fields of the neighboring country under contribution; in the course of which chivalrous expeditions they now and then get a shot from the rusty artillery of some refractory farmer. Occasionally, too, while they are quietly taking the air beyond the park boundaries, they have

the incaution to come within reach of the truant bowmen of Slingsby's school, and receive a flight shot from some unlucky urchin's arrow. In such case the wounded adventurer will sometimes have just strength enough to bring himself home, and, giving up the ghost at the rookery, will hang dangling "all abroad" on a bough, like a thief on a gibbet—an awful warning to his friends, and an object of great commiseration to the Squire.

But, maugre all these untoward incidents, the rooks have, upon the whole, a happy holiday life of it. When their young are reared, and fairly launched upon their native element, the air, the cares of the old folks seem over, and they resume all their aristocratical dignity and idleness. I have envied them the enjoyment which they appear to have in their ethereal heights, sporting with clamorous exultation about their lofty bowers; sometimes hovering over them, sometimes partially alighting upon the topmost branches, and there balancing with outstretched wings, and swinging in the breeze. Sometimes they seem to take a fashionable drive to the church, and amuse themselves by circling in airy rings about its spire; at other times a mere garrison is left at home to mount guard in their stronghold at the grove, while the rest roam abroad to enjoy the fine weather. About

sunset the garrison gives notice of their return; their faint cawing will be heard from a great distance, and they will be seen far off like a sable cloud, and then, nearer and nearer, until they all come soaring home. Then they perform several grand circuits in the air, over the Hall and garden, wheeling closer and closer, until they gradually settle down; when a prodigious cawing takes place, as though they were relating their day's adventures.

I like at such times to walk about these dusky groves, and hear the various sounds of these airy people roosted so high above me. As the gloom increases, their conversation subsides, and they gradually drop asleep; but every now and then there is a querulous note, as if some one was quarrelling for a pillow, or a little more of the blanket. It is late in the evening before they completely sink to repose, and then their old anchorite neighbor, the owl, begins his lonely hootings from his bachelor's-hall, in the wood.

MAY-DAY.

It is the choice time of the year,
For the violets now appear;
Now the rose receives its birth,
And pretty primrose decks the earth.
Then to the May-pole come away,
For it is now a holiday.

ACTEON AND DIANA.

AS I was lying in bed this morning, enjoying one of those half dreams, half reveries, which are so pleasant in the country, when the birds are singing about the window, and the sunbeams peeping through the curtains, I was roused by the sound of music. On going downstairs, I found a number of villagers, dressed in their holiday clothes, bearing a pole ornamented with garlands and ribbons, and accompanied by the village band of music, under the direction of the tailor, the pale fellow who plays on the clarionet. They had all sprigs of hawthorn, or, as it is called, "the May," in their hats, and had brought green branches and flowers to decorate the Hall doors and windows. They had come

to give notice that the May-pole was reared on the green, and to invite the household to witness the sports. The Hall, according to custom, became a scene of hurry and delighted confusion. The servants were all agog with May and music; and there was no keeping either the tongues or the feet of the maids quiet, who were anticipating the sports of the green and the evening dance.

I repaired to the village at an early hour to enjoy the merry-making. The morning was pure and sunny, such as a May morning is always described. The fields were white with daisies, the hawthorn was covered with its fragrant blossoms, the bee hummed about every bank, and the swallow played high in the air about the village steeple. It was one of those genial days when we seem to draw in pleasure with the very air we breathe, and to feel happy we know not why. Whoever has felt the worth of worthy man, or has doted on lovely woman, will, on such a day, call them tenderly to mind, and feel his heart all alive with long-buried recollections. "For thenne," says the excellent romance of King Arthur, "lovers call ageyne to their mynde old gentilnes and old servyse, and many kind dedes, that were forgotten by neglygence."

Before reaching the village, I saw the May-

pole towering above the cottages, with its gay garlands and streamers, and heard the sound of music. Booths had been set up near it, for the reception of company; and a bower of green branches and flowers for the Queen of May, a fresh, rosy-cheeked girl of the village.

A band of morris-dancers were capering on the green in their fantastic dresses, jingling with hawks' bells, with a boy dressed up as Maid Marian, and the attendant fool rattling his box to collect contributions from the by-standers. The gypsy-women too were already plying their mystery in by-corners of the village, reading the hands of the simple country-girls, and no doubt promising them all good husbands and tribes of children.

The Squire made his appearance in the course of the morning, attended by the parson, and was received with loud acclamations. He mingled among the country people throughout the day, giving and receiving pleasure wherever he went. The amusements of the day were under the management of Slingsby, the schoolmaster, who is not merely lord of misrule in his school, but master of the revels to the village. He was bustling about with the perplexed and anxious air of a man who has the oppressive burden of promoting other people's merriment upon his mind. He had involved

himself in a dozen scrapes in consequence of a politic intrigue which, by the by, Master Simon and the Oxonian were at the bottom of, which had for its object the election of the Queen of May. He had met with violent opposition from a faction of ale-drinkers, who were in favor of a bouncing bar-maid, the daughter of the inn-keeper; but he had been too strongly backed not to carry his point, though it shows that these rural crowns, like all others, are objects of great ambition and heart-burning. I am told that Master Simon takes great interest, though in an underhand way, in the election of these May-day Queens; and that the chaplet is generally secured for some rustic beauty who has found favor in his eyes.

In the course of the day there were various games of strength and agility on the green, at which a knot of village veterans presided, as judges of the lists. Among these Ready-Money Jack took the lead, looking with a learned and critical eye on the merits of the different candidates; and though he was very laconic, and sometimes merely expressed himself by a nod, it was evident his opinions far outweighed those of the most loquacious.

Young Jack Tibbets was the hero of the day, and carried off most of the prizes, though in some of the feats of agility he was rivalled by

the "prodigal son," who appeared much in his element on this occasion; but his most formidable competitor was the notorious gypsy, the redoubtable "Starlight Tom." I was rejoiced at having an opportunity of seeing this "minion of the moon" in broad daylight. I found him a tall, swarthy, good-looking fellow, with a lofty air, something like what I have seen in an Indian chieftain; and with a certain lounging, easy, and almost graceful carriage, which I have often remarked in beings of the lazaroni order, who lead an idle, loitering life, and have a gentleman-like contempt of labor.

Master Simon and the old general reconnoitred the ground together, and indulged a vast deal of harmless raking among the buxom country-girls. Master Simon would give some of them a kiss on meeting with them, and would ask after their sisters, for he is acquainted with most of the farmers' families. Sometimes he would whisper, and affect to talk mischievously with them, and, if bantered on the subject, would turn it off with a laugh, though it was evident he liked to be suspected of being a gay Lothario amongst them.

He had much to say to the farmers about their farms; and seemed to know all their horses by name. There was an old fellow, with a round ruddy face, and a night-cap under

his hat, the village wit, who took several occasions to crack a joke with him in the hearing of his companions, to whom he would turn and wink hard when Master Simon had passed.

The harmony of the day, however, had nearly, at one time, been interrupted, by the appearance of the radical on the ground, with two or three of his disciples. He soon got engaged in argument in the very thick of the throng, above which I could hear his voice, and now and then see his meagre hand, half a mile out of the sleeve, elevated in the air in violent gesticulation, and flourishing a pamphlet by way of truncheon. He was decrying these idle nonsensical amusements in times of public distress, when it was every one's business to think of other matters, and to be miserable. The honest village logicians could make no stand against him, especially as he was seconded by his proselytes; when, to their great joy, Master Simon and the general came drifting down into the field of action. Master Simon was for making off, as soon as he found himself in the neighborhood of this fire-ship; but the general was too loyal to suffer such talk in his hearing, and thought, no doubt, that a look and a word from a gentleman would be sufficient to shut up so shabby an orator. The latter, however, was no respecter of persons, but rather exulted

in having such important antagonists. He talked with greater volubility than ever, and soon drowned them in declamation on the subject of taxes (poor-rates), and the national debt. Master Simon endeavored to brush along in his usual excursive manner, which always answered amazingly well with the villagers ; but the radical was one of those pestilent fellows that pin a man down to facts ; and, indeed, he had two or three pamphlets in his pocket, to support every thing he advanced by printed documents. The general, too, found himself betrayed into a more serious action than his dignity could brook, and looked like a mighty Dutch Indiaman grievously peppered by a petty privateer. In vain he swelled and looked big, and talked large, and endeavored to make up by pomp of manner for poverty of matter ; every home-thrust of the radical made him wheeze like a bellows, and seemed to let a volume of wind out of him. In a word, the two worthies from the Hall were completely dumb-founded, and this too in the presence of several of Master Simon's stanch admirers, who had always looked up to him as infallible. I do not know how he and the general would have managed to draw their forces decently from the field, had not a match at grinning through a horse-collar been announced, whereupon the

radical retired with great expression of contempt, and, as soon as his back was turned, the argument was carried against him all hollow.

"Did you ever hear such a pack of stuff, general?" said Master Simon; "there 's no talking with one of these chaps when he once gets that confounded Cobbett in his head."

"S'blood, sir!" said the general, wiping his forehead, "such fellows ought to be transported!"

In the latter part of the day the ladies from the Hall paid a visit to the green. The fair Julia made her appearance, leaning on her lover's arm, and looking extremely pale and interesting. As she was a great favorite in the village, where she had been known from childhood, and as her late accident had been much talked about, the sight of her caused very manifest delight, and some of the old women of the village blessed her sweet face as she passed.

While they were walking about, I noticed the schoolmaster in earnest conversation with the Queen of May, evidently endeavoring to spirit her up to some formidable undertaking. At length, as the party from the Hall approached her bower, she came forth, faltering at every step, until she reached the spot where the fair Julia stood between her lover and Lady

Lillycraft. The little Queen then took the chaplet of flowers from her head, and attempted to put it on that of the bride elect; but the confusion of both was so great that the wreath would have fallen to the ground, had not the officer caught it, and, laughing, placed it upon the blushing brows of his mistress. There was something charming in the very embarrassment of these two young creatures, both so beautiful, yet so different in their kinds of beauty. Master Simon told me, afterwards, that the Queen of May was to have spoken a few verses which the schoolmaster had written for her; but she had neither wit to understand, nor memory to recollect them. "Besided," added he, "between you and I, she murders the king's English abominably; so she has acted the part of a wise woman in holding her tongue, and trusting to her pretty face."

Among the other characters from the Hall was Mrs. Hannah, my Lady Lillycraft's gentlewoman: to my surprise, she was escorted by old Christy, the huntsman, and followed by his ghost of a greyhound; but I find they are very old acquaintances, being drawn together by some sympathy of disposition. Mrs. Hannah moved about with starched dignity among the rustics, who drew back from her with more awe than they did from her mistress. Her mouth

seemed shut as with a clasp; excepting that I now and then heard the word "fellows!" escape from between her lips, as she got accidentally jostled in the crowd.

But there was one other heart present that did not enter into the merriment of the scene, which was that of the simple Phœbe Wilkins, the housekeeper's niece. The poor girl has continued to pine and whine for some time past, in consequence of the obstinate coldness of her lover; never was a little flirtation more severely punished. She appeared this day on the green, gallanted by a smart servant out of livery, and had evidently resolved to try the hazardous experiment of awakening the jealousy of her lover. She was dressed in her very best; affected an air of great gayety, talked loud and girlishly, and laughed when there was nothing to laugh at. There was, however, an aching, heavy heart in the poor baggage's bosom, in spite of all her levity. Her eye turned every now and then in quest of her reckless lover, and her cheek grew pale, and her fictitious gayety vanished, on seeing him paying his rustic homage to the little May-day Queen.

My attention was now diverted by a fresh stir and bustle. Music was heard from a distance; a banner was advancing up the road,

preceded by a rustic band playing something like a march, and followed by a sturdy throng of country lads, the chivalry of a neighboring and rival village.

No sooner had they reached the green than they challenged the heroes of the day to new trials of strength and activity. Several gymnastic contests ensued for the honor of the respective villages. In the course of these exercises, young Tibbets and the champion of the adverse party had an obstinate match at wrestling. They tugged, and strained, and panted, without either getting the mastery, until both came to the ground, and rolled upon the green. Just then the disconsolate Phœbe came by. She saw her recreant lover in fierce contest, and as she thought, in danger. In a moment pride, pique, and coquetry were forgotten; she rushed into the ring, seized upon the rival champion by the hair, and was on the point of wreaking on him her puny vengeance, when a buxom, strapping country lass, the sweetheart of the prostrate swain, pounced upon her like a hawk, and would have stripped her of her fine plumage in a twinkling had she also not been seized in her turn.

A complete tumult ensued. The chivalry of the two villages became embroiled. Blows began to be dealt, and sticks to be flourished.

Phœbe was carried off from the field in hysterics. In vain did the sages of the village interfere. The sententious apothecary endeavored to pour the soothing oil of his philosophy upon this tempestuons sea of passion, but was tumbled into the dust. Slingsby, the pedagogue, who is a great lover of peace, went into the midst of the throng, as marshal of the day, to put an end to the commotion, but was rent in twain, and came out with his garment hanging in two strips from his shoulders: upon which the prodigal son dashed in with fury to revenge the insult sustained by his patron. The tumult thickened; I caught glimpses of the jockey-cap of old Christy, like the helmet of a chieftain, bobbing about in the midst of the scuffle; while Mistress Hannah, separated from her doughty protector, was squalling and striking at right and left with a faded parasol; being tossed and tousled about by the crowd in such wise as never happened to maiden gentlewoman before.

At length old Ready-Money Jack made his way unto the very thickest of the throng, tearing it as it were, apart, and enforcing peace *vi et armis*. It was surprising to see the sudden quiet that ensued. The storm settled down at once into tranquillity. The parties, having no real grounds of hostility, were readily pacified,

and in fact were a little at a loss to know why and how they had got by the ears. Slingsby was speedily stitched together again by his friend the tailor, and resumed his usual good humor. Mrs. Hannah drew on one side to plume her rumpled feathers; and old Christy, having repaired his damages, took her under his arm, and they swept back again to the Hall, ten times more bitter against mankind than ever.

The Tibbets family alone seemed slow in recovering from the agitation of the scene. Young Jack was evidently very much moved by the heroism of the unlucky Phœbe. His mother, who had been summoned to the field of action by news of the affray, was in a sad panic, and had need of all her management to keep him from following his mistress, and coming to a perfect reconciliation.

What heightened the alarm and perplexity of the good managing dame was, that the matter had aroused the slow apprehensions of old Ready-Money himself; who was very much struck by the intrepid interference of so pretty and delicate a girl, and was sadly puzzled to understand the meaning of the violent agitation in his family.

When all this came to the ears of the Squire, he was grievously scandalized that his May-

Day fête should have been disgraced by such a brawl. He ordered Phœbe to appear before him, but the girl was so frightened and distressed, that she came sobbing and trembling, and, at the first question he asked, fell again into hysterics. Lady Lillycraft, who understood there was an affair of the heart at the bottom of this distress, immediately took the girl into great favor and protection, and made her peace with the Squire. This was the only thing that disturbed the harmony of the day, if we except the discomfiture of Master Simon and the general by the radical. Upon the whole, therefore, the Squire had very fair reason to be satisfied that he had rode his hobby throughout the day without any other molestation.

The reader learned in these matters, will perceive that all this was but a faint shadow of the once gay and fanciful rites of May. The peasantry have lost the proper feeling for these rites, and have grown almost as strange to them as the boors of La Mancha were to the customs of chivalry in the days of the valorous Don Quixote. Indeed, I considered it a proof of the discretion with which the Squire rides his hobby, that he had not pushed the thing any further, nor attempted to revive many obselete usages of the day, which, in the present matter-of-fact times, would appear affected and absurd. I

must say, though I do it under the rose, the general brawl in which this festival had nearly terminated, has made me doubt whether these rural customs of the good old times were always so very loving and innocent as we are apt to fancy them, and whether the peasantry in those times were really so Arcadian as they have been fondly represented. I begin to fear—

> "Those days were never; airy dreams
> Sat for the picture, and the poet's hand,
> Imparting substance to an empty shade,
> Imposed a gay delirium for a truth.
> Grant it; I still must envy them an age
> That favored such a dream."

THE MANUSCRIPT.

YESTERDAY was a day of quiet and repose after the bustle of May-Day. During the morning I joined the ladies in a small sitting-room, the windows of which came down to the floor, and opened upon a terrace of the garden, which was set out with delicate shrubs and flowers. The soft sunshine falling into the room through the branches of trees that overhung the windows, the sweet smell of flowers, and the singing of birds, produced a pleasing yet calming effect on the whole party. Some time elapsed without any one speaking. Lady Lillycraft and Miss Templeton were sitting by an elegant work-table, near one of the windows, occupied with some pretty lady-like work. The captain was on a stool at his mistress' feet, looking over some music; and poor Phœbe Wilkins, who has always been a kind of pet among the ladies, but who has risen vastly in favor with Lady Lillycraft in consequence of some tender confessions, sat in one corner of

the room, with swollen eyes, working pensively at some of the fair Julia's wedding-ornaments.

The silence was interrupted by her ladyship, who suddenly proposed a task to the captain. "I am in your debt," said she, "for that tale you read to us the other day; I will now furnish one in return, if you 'll read it; and it is just suited to this sweet May morning, for it is all about love!"

The proposition seemed to delight every one present. The captain smiled assent. Her ladyship rang for her page, and dispatched him to her room for the manuscript. "As the captain," said she, "gave us an account of the author of his story, it is but right I should give one of mine. It was written by the parson of the parish where I reside. He is a thin, elderly man, of a delicate constitution, but positively one of the most charming men that ever lived. He lost his wife a few years since; one of the sweetest women you ever saw. He has two sons, whom he educates himself; both of whom already write delightful poetry. His parsonage is a lovely place, close by the church, all overrun with ivy and honeysuckles; with the sweetest flower-garden about it; for, you know, our country clergymen are almost always fond of flowers, and make their parsonages perfect pictures.

"His living is a very good one, and he is very much beloved, and does a great deal of good in the neighborhood, and among the poor. And then such sermons as he preaches! Oh, if you could only hear one taken from a text in Solomon's Song, all about love and matrimony, one of the sweetest things you ever heard! He preaches it at least once a year, in spring-time, for he knows I am fond of it. He always dines with me on Sundays, and often brings me some of the sweetest pieces of poetry, all about the pleasures of melancholy, and such subjects, that make me cry so, you can't think. I wish he would publish. I think he has some things as sweet as any thing of Moore or Lord Byron.

"He fell into very ill health, some time ago, and was advised to go to the Continent; and I gave him no peace until he went, and promised to take care of his two boys until he returned.

"He was gone for above a year, and was quite restored. When he came back, he sent me the tale I 'm going to show you.—Oh, here it is!" said she, as the page put in her hands a beautiful box of satin-wood. She unlocked it, and among several parcels of notes on embossed paper, cards of charades, and copies of verses, she drew out a crimson velvet case, that smelt very much of perfumes. From this she took a

manuscript, daintily written on gilt-edged vellum paper, and stitched with a light-blue ribbon. This she handed to the captain, who read the following tale, which I have procured for the entertainment of the reader.

ANNETTE DELARBRE.

The soldier frae the war returns
And the merchant from the main,
But I hae parted wi' my love,
And ne'er to meet again,
My dear,
And ne'er to meet again.

When day is gone, and night is come,
And a' are boun to sleep,
I think on them that 's far awa
The lee-lang night and weep,
My dear,
The lee-lang night and weep.
OLD SCOTCH BALLAD.

IN the course of a tour in Lower Normandy I remained for a day or two in the old town of Honfleur, which stands near the mouth of the Seine. It was the time of a fête, and all the world was thronging in the evening to dance at the fair, held before the chapel of our Lady of Grace. As I like all kinds of innocent merry-making, I joined the throng.

The chapel is situated at the top of a high hill, or promontory, whence its bell may be heard at a distance by the mariner at night. It is said to have given the name to the port of Havre de Grace, which lies directly opposite, on

the other side of the Seine. The road up to the chapel went in a zigzag course, along the brow of the steep coast; it was shaded by trees, from between which I had beautiful peeps at the ancient towers of Honfleur below, the varied scenery of the opposite shore, the white buildings of Havre in the distance, and the wide sea beyond. The road was enlivened by groups of peasant girls, in bright crimson dresses, and tall caps; and I found all the flower of the neighborhood assembled on the green that crowns the summit of the hill.

The chapel of Notre Dame de Grace is a favorite resort of the inhabitants of Honfleur and its vicinity, both for pleasure and devotion. At this little chapel prayers are put up by the mariners of the port previous to their voyages, and by their friends during their absence; and votive offerings are hung about its walls, in fulfilment of vows made during times of shipwreck and disaster. The chapel is surrounded by trees. Over the portal is an image of the Virgin and Child, with an inscription which struck me as being quite poetical:

"Etoile de la mer, priez pour nous!"
(Star of the sea, pray for us.)

On a level spot near the chapel, under a grove of noble trees, the populace dance on fine

summer evenings; and here are held frequent fairs and fêtes, which assemble all the rustic beauty of the loveliest parts of Lower Normandy. The present was an occasion of the kind. Booths and tents were erected among the trees; there were the usual displays of finery to tempt the rural coquette, and of wonderful shows to entice the curious: mountebanks were exerting their eloquence; jugglers and fortune-tellers astonishing the credulous; while whole rows of grotesque saints, in wood and wax-work, were offered for the purchase of the pious.

The fête had assembled in one view all the picturesque costumes of the Pays d'Auge and the Coté de Caux. I beheld tall, stately caps, and trim bodices, according to fashions which have been handed down from mother to daughter for centuries; the exact counterparts of those worn in the time of the Conqueror; and which surprised me by their faithful resemblance to those in the old pictures of Froissart's Chronicles, and in the paintings of illuminated manuscripts. Any one, also, who has been in Lower Normandy, must have remarked the beauty of the peasantry, and that air of native elegance which prevails among them. It is to this country, undoubtedly, that the English owe their good looks. It was hence that the bright carna-

tion, the fine blue eye, the light auburn hair, passed over to England in the train of the Conqueror, and filled the land with beauty.

The scene before me was perfectly enchanting: the assemblage of so many fresh and blooming faces; the gay groups in fanciful dresses; some dancing on the green, others strolling about, or seated on the grass; the fine clumps of trees in the foreground, bordering the brow of this airy height, and the broad green sea, sleeping in summer tranquillity, in the distance.

Whilst I was regarding this animated picture, I was struck with the appearance of a beautiful girl, who passed through the crowd without seeming to take any interest in their amusements. She was slender and delicate, without the bloom upon her cheek usual among the peasantry of Normandy, and her blue eyes had a singular and melancholy expression. She was accompanied by a venerable-looking man, whom I presumed to be her father. There was a whisper among the bystanders, and a wistful look after her as she passed; the young men touched their hats, and some of the children followed her at a little distance, watching her movements. She approached the edge of the hill, where there is a little platform, whence the people of Honfleur look out for the approach of vessels. Here she stood for some time waving her hand-

kerchief, though there was nothing to be seen but two or three fishing-boats, like mere specks on the bosom of the distant ocean.

These circumstances excited my curiosity, and I made some inquiries about her, which were answered with readiness and intelligence by a priest of the neighboring chapel. Our conversation drew together several of the bystanders, each of whom had something to communicate, and from them all I gathered the following particulars.

Annette Delarbre was the only daughter of one of the higher order of farmers, or small proprietors, as they are called, of Pont l'Eveque, a pleasant village not far from Honfleur, in that rich pastoral part of Lower Normandy called the Pays d'Auge. Annette was the pride and delight of her parents, who brought her up with the fondest indulgence. She was gay, tender, petulant, and susceptible. All her feelings were quick and ardent; and having never experienced contradiction nor restraint, she was little practised in self-control: nothing but the native goodness of her heart kept her from running continually into error.

Even while a child, her susceptibility was evinced in an attachment formed to a playmate, Eugene la Forgue, the only son of a widow of the neighborhood. Their childish love was an

epitome of maturer passion ; it had its caprices, and jealousies, and quarrels, and reconciliations. It was assuming something of a graver character as Annette entered her fifteenth, and Eugene his nineteenth year, when he was suddenly carried off to the army by the conscription.

It was a heavy blow to his widowed mother, for he was her only pride and comfort ; but it was one of those sudden bereavements which mothers were perpetually doomed to feel in France, during the time that continual and bloody wars were incessantly draining her youth. It was a temporary affliction also to Annette, to lose her lover. With tender embraces, half childish, half womanish, she parted from him. The tears streamed from her blue eyes as she bound a braid of her fair hair round his wrist ; but the smiles still broke through ; for she was yet too young to feel how serious a thing is separation, and how many chances there are, when parting in this wide world, against our ever meeting again.

Weeks, months, years flew by. Annette increased in beauty as she increased in years, and was the reigning belle of the neighborhood. Her time passed innocently and happily. Her father was a man of some consequence in the rural community, and his house was the resort of the gayest of the village. Annette held a

kind of rural court ; she was always surrounded by companions of her own age, among whom she shone unrivalled. Much of their time was passed in making lace, the prevalent manufacture of the neighborhood. As they sat at this delicate and feminine labor, the merry tale and sprightly song went round : none laughed with a lighter heart than Annette ; and if she sang. her voice was perfect melody. Their evenings were enlivened by the dance, or those pleasant social games so prevalent among the French ; and when she appeared at the village ball on Sunday evenings, she was the theme of universal admiration.

As she was a rural heiress, she did not want for suitors. Many advantageous offers were made her, but she refused them all. She laughed at the pretended pangs of her admirers, and triumphed over them with the caprice of buoyant youth and conscious beauty. With all her apparent levity, however, could any one have read the story of her heart, they might have traced in it some fond remembrance of her early playmate, not so deeply graven as to be painful, but too deep to be easily obliterated ; and they might have noticed, amidst all her gayety, the tenderness that marked her manner towards the mother of Eugene. She would often steal away from her youthful companions and their amusements,

to pass whole days with the good widow; listening to her fond talk about her boy, and blushing with secret pleasure, when his letters were read, at finding herself a constant theme of recollection and inquiry.

At length the sudden return of peace, which sent many a warrior to his native cottage, brought back Eugene, a young sunburnt soldier, to the village. I need not say how rapturously his return was greeted by his mother, who saw in him the pride and staff of her old age. He had risen in the service by his merit, but brought away little from the wars, excepting a soldier-like air, a gallant name, and a scar across the forehead. He brought back, however, a nature unspoiled by the camp. He was frank, open, generous, and ardent. His heart was quick and kind in its impulses, and was perhaps a little softer from having suffered; it was full of tenderness for Annette. He had received frequent accounts of her from his mother, and the mention of her kindness to his lonely parent had rendered her doubly dear to him. He had been wounded; he had been a prisoner; he had been in various troubles, but had always preserved the braid of hair which she had bound round his arm. It had been a kind of talisman to him; he had many a time looked upon it as he lay on the hard ground,

and the thought that he might one day see Annette again, and the fair fields about his native village, had cheered his heart, and enabled him to bear up against every hardship.

He had left Annette almost a child ; he found her a blooming woman. If he had loved her before, he now adored her. Annette was equally struck with the improvement time had made in her lover. She noticed, with secret admiration, his superiority to the other young men of the village ; the frank, lofty, military air that distinguished him from all the rest at their rural gatherings. The more she saw him the more her light, playful fondness of former years deepened into ardent and powerful affection. But Annette was a rural belle. She had tasted the sweets of dominion, and had been rendered wilful and capricious by constant indulgence at home, and admiration abroad. She was conscious of her power over Eugene, and delighted in exercising it. She sometimes treated him with petulant caprice, enjoying the pain which she inflicted by her frowns, from the idea how soon she would chase it away again by her smiles. She took a pleasure in alarming his fears, by affecting a temporary preference for some one or other of his rivals ; and then would delight in allaying them by an ample measure of returning kindness. Perhaps

there was some degree of vanity gratified by all this; it might be a matter of triumph to show her absolute power over the young soldier, who was the universal object of female admiration. Eugene, however, was of too serious and ardent a nature to be trifled with. He loved too fervently not to be filled with doubt. He saw Annette surrounded by admirers, and full of animation, the gayest among the gay at all their rural festivities, and apparently most gay when he was most dejected. Every one saw through this caprice but himself; every one saw that in reality she doted on him; but Eugene alone suspected the sincerity of her affection. For some time he bore this coquetry with secret impatience and distrust; but his feelings grew sore and irritable, and overcame his self-command. A slight misunderstanding took place; a quarrel ensued. Annette, unaccustomed to be thwarted and contradicted, and full of the insolence of youthful beauty, assumed an air of disdain. She refused all explanations to her lover, and they parted in anger. That very evening Eugene saw her, full of gayety, dancing with one of his rivals; and as her eye caught his, fixed on her with unfeigned distress, it sparkled with more than usual vivacity. It was a finishing blow to his hopes, already so much impaired by secret distrust. Pride and

resentment both struggled in his breast, and seemed to rouse his spirit to all his wonted energy. He retired from her presence with the hasty determination never to see her again.

A woman is more considerate in affairs of love than a man, because love is more the study and business of her life. Annette soon repented of her indiscretion; she felt that she had used her lover unkindly; she felt that she had trifled with his sincere and generous nature; and then he looked so handsome when he parted after their quarrel—his fine features lighted up by indignation. She had intended making up with him at the evening dance; but his sudden departure prevented her. She now promised herself that when next they met she would amply repay him by the sweets of a perfect reconciliation, and that, thenceforward, she would never—never tease him more! That promise was not to be fulfilled. Day after day passed; but Eugene did not make his appearance. Sunday evening came, the usual time when all the gayety of the village assembled; but Eugene was not there. She inquired after him; he had left the village. She now became alarmed, and, forgetting all coyness and affected indifference, called on Eugene's mother for an explanation. She found her full of afflic-

tion, and learnt with surprise and consternation that Eugene had gone to sea.

While his feelings were yet smarting with her affected disdain, and his heart a prey to alternate indignation and despair, he had suddenly embraced an invitation which had repeatedly been made him by a relative, who was fitting out a ship from the port of Honfleur, and who wished him to be the companion of his voyage. Absence appeared to him the only cure for his unlucky passion; and in the temporary transports of his feelings there was something gratifying in the idea of having half the world intervene between them. The hurry necessary for his departure left no time for cool reflection; it rendered him deaf to the remonstrances of his afflicted mother. He hastened to Honfleur just in time to make the needful preparations for the voyage; and the first news that Annette received of this sudden determination was a letter delivered by his mother, returning her pledges of affection, particularly the long-treasured braid of her hair, and bidding her a last farewell, in terms more full of sorrow and tenderness than upbraiding.

This was the first stroke of real anguish that Annette had ever received, and it overcame her. The vivacity of her spirits was apt to hurry her to extremes; she for a time gave way to un-

governable transports of affliction and remorse, and manifested, in the violence of her grief, the real ardor of her affection. The thought occurred to her that the ship might not yet have sailed; she seized on the hope with eagerness, and hastened with her father to Honfleur. The ship had sailed that very morning. From the heights above the town she saw it lessening to a speck on the broad bosom of the ocean, and before evening the white sail had faded from her sight. She turned full of anguish to the neighboring chapel of Our Lady of Grace, and throwing herself on the pavement, poured out prayers and tears for the safe return of her lover.

When she returned home, the cheerfulness of her spirits was at an end. She looked back with remorse and self-upbraiding on her past caprices; she turned with distaste from the adulation of her admirers, and had no longer any relish for the amusements of the village. With humiliation and diffidence she sought the widowed mother of Eugene; but was received by her with an overflowing heart; for she only beheld in Annette one who could sympathize in her doting fondness for her son. It seemed some alleviation of her remorse to sit by the mother all day, to study her wants, to beguile her heavy hours, to hang about her with the caressing endearments of a daughter, and to seek by every

means, if possible, to supply the place of the son, whom she reproached herself with having driven away.

In the meantime the ship made a prosperous voyage to her destined port. Eugene's mother received a letter from him, in which he lamented the preciptancy of his departure. The voyage had given him time for sober reflection. If Annette had been unkind to him, he ought not to have forgotten what was due to his mother, who was now advanced in years. He accused himself of selfishness in only listening to the suggestions of his own inconsiderate passions. He promised to return with the ship, to make his mind up to his disappointment, and to think of nothing but making his mother happy —— "And when he does return," said Annette, clasping her hands with transport, "it shall not be my fault if he ever leaves us again."

The time approached for the ship's return. She was daily expected, when the weather became dreadfully tempestuous. Day after day brought news of vessels foundered, or driven on shore, and the coast was strewed with wrecks. Intelligence was received of the looked-for ship having been seen dismasted in a violent storm, and the greatest fears were entertained for her safety.

Annette never left the side of Eugene's mother.

She watched every change of her countenance with painful solicitude, and endeavored to cheer her with hopes, while her own mind was racked by anxiety. She tasked her efforts to be gay; but it was a forced and unnatural gayety; a sigh from the mother would completely check it; and when she could no longer restrain the rising tears, she would hurry away and pour out her agony in secret. Every anxious look, every anxious inquiry of the mother, whenever a door opened, or a strange face appeared, was an arrow to her soul. She considered every disappointment as a pang of her own infliction, and her heart sickened under the care-worn expression of the maternal eye. At length this suspense became insupportable. She left the village and hastened to Honfleur, hoping every hour, every moment, to receive some tidings of her lover. She paced the pier, and wearied the seamen of the port with her inquiries. She made a daily pilgrimage to the chapel of Our Lady of Grace; hung votive garlands on the wall, and passed hours either kneeling before the altar, or looking out from the brow of the hill upon the angry sea.

At length word was brought that the long-wished-for vessel was in sight. She was seen standing into the mouth of the Seine, shattered and crippled, bearing marks of having been

sadly tempest-tossed. A general joy was diffused by her return ; and there was not a brighter eye, nor a lighter heart, than Annette's in the little port of Honfleur. The ship came to anchor in the river, and a boat put off for the shore. The populace crowded down to the pier-head to welcome it. Annette stood blushing, and smiling, and trembling, and weeping; for a thousand painfully pleasant emotions agitated her breast at the thoughts of the meeting and reconciliation about to take place.

Her heart throbbed to pour itself out, and atone to her gallant lover for all its errors. At one moment she would place herself in a conspicuous situation, where she might catch his view at once, and surprise him by her welcome ; but the next moment a doubt would come across her mind, and she would shrink among the throng, trembling and faint, and gasping with her emotions. Her agitation increased as the boat drew near, until it became distressing ; and it was almost a relief to her when she perceived that her lover was not there. She presumed that some accident had detained him on board of the ship, and felt that the delay would enable her to gather more self-possession for the meeting. As the boat neared the shore, many inquiries were made, and laconic answers returned. At length Annette heard some inquiries after her lover.

Her heart palpitated; there was a moment's pause; the reply was brief, but awful. He had been washed from the deck, with two of the crew, in the midst of a stormy night, when it was impossible to render any assistance. A piercing shriek broke from among the crowd, and Annette had nearly fallen into the waves.

The sudden revulsion of feelings after such a transient gleam of happiness, was too much for her harassed frame. She was carried home senseless. Her life was for some time despaired of, and it was months before she recovered her health; but she never had perfectly recovered her mind: it still remained unsettled with respect to her lover's fate.

"The subject," continued my informer, "is never mentioned in her hearing; but she sometimes speaks of it herself, and it seems as though there were some vague train of impressions in her mind, in which hope and fear are strangely mingled; some imperfect idea of her lover's shipwreck, and yet some expectation of his return.

"Her parents have tried every means to cheer her, and to banish these gloomy images from her thoughts. They assemble round her the young companions in whose society she used to delight, and they will work, and chat, and sing, and laugh, as formerly; but she will sit silently

among them, and will sometimes weep in the midst of their gayety; and, if spoken to, will make no reply, but look up with streaming eyes, and sing a dismal little song, which she has learned somewhere, about a shipwreck. It makes every one's heart ache to see her in this way, for she used to be the happiest creature in the village.

"She passes the greatest part of the time with Eugene's mother; whose only consolation is her society, and who dotes on her with a mother's tenderness. She is the only one that has perfect influence over Annette in every mood. The poor girl seems, as formerly, to make an effort to be cheerful in her company; but will sometimes gaze upon her with the most piteous look, and then kiss her gray hairs, and fall on her neck and weep.

"She is not always melancholy, however; there are occasional intervals when she will be bright and animated for days together; but a degree of wildness attends these fits of gayety, that prevents their yielding any satisfaction to her friends. At such times she will arrange her room, which is all covered with pictures of ships and legends of saints; and will wreathe a white chaplet, as for a wedding, and prepare wedding-ornaments. She will listen anxiously at the door, and look frequently out at the

window, as if expecting some one's arrival. It is supposed that at such times she is looking for her lover's return; but, as no one touches upon the theme, or mentions his name in her presence, the current of her thoughts is mere matter of conjecture. Now and then she will make a pilgrimage to the chapel of Notre Dame de Grace; where she will pray for hours at the altar, and decorate the images with wreaths that she has woven; or will wave her handkerchief from the terrace, as you have seen, if there is any vessel in the distance."

Upwards of a year, he informed me, had now elapsed without effacing from her mind this singular taint of insanity; still her friends hoped it might gradually wear away. They had at one time removed her to a distant part of the country, in hopes that absence from the scenes connected with her story might have a salutary effect; but, when her periodical melancholy returned, she became more restless and wretched than usual, and, secretly escaping from her friends, set out on foot, without knowing the road, on one of her pilgrimages to the chapel.

This little story entirely drew my attention from the gay scene of the fête, and fixed it upon the beautiful Annette. While she was yet standing on the terrace, the vesper-bell rang

from the neighboring chapel. She listened for a moment, and then drawing a small rosary from her bosom, walked in that direction. Several of the peasantry followed her in silence; and I felt too much interested not to do the same.

The chapel, as I said before, is in the midst of a grove, on the high promontory. The inside is hung around with little models of ships, and rude paintings of wrecks and perils at sea, aud providential deliverances—the votive offerings of captains and crews that have been saved, On entering, Annette paused for a moment before a picture of the Virgin, which I observed had recently been decorated with a wreath of artificial flowers. When she reached the middle of the chapel she knelt down, and those who followed her involuntarily did the same at a little distance. The evening sun shone softly through the checkered grove into one window of the chapel. A perfect stillness reigned within; and this stillness was the more impressive, contrasted with the distant sound of music and merriment from the fair. I could not take my eyes off from the poor suppliant; her lips moved as she told her beads, but her prayers were breathed in silence. It might have been mere fancy excited by the scene, that, as she raised her eyes to heaven, I thought they had

an expression truly seraphic. But I am easily affected by female beauty, and there was something in this mixture of love, devotion, and partial insanity, inexpressibly touching.

As the poor girl left the chapel, there was a sweet serenity in her looks; and I was told she would return home, and in all probability be calm and cheerful for days, and even weeks; in which time it was supposed that hope predominated in her mental malady; and when the dark side of her mind, as her friends call it, was about to turn up, it would be known by her neglecting her distaff or her lace, singing plaintive songs, and weeping in silence.

She passed on from the chapel without noticing the fête, but smiling and speaking to many as she passed. I followed her with my eyes as she descended the winding road towards Honfleur, leaning on her father's arm. "Heaven," thought I, "has ever its store of balms for the hurt mind and wounded spirit, and may in time rear up this broken flower to be once more the pride and joy of the valley. The very delusion in which the poor girl walks may be one of those mists kindly diffused by Providence over the regions of thought, when they become too fruitful of misery. The veil may gradually be raised which obscures the horizon of her mind, as she is enabled steadily and calmly to

contemplate the sorrows at present hidden in mercy from her view."

On my return from Paris, about a year afterwards, I turned off from the beaten route at Rouen, to revisit some of the most striking scenes of Lower Normandy. Having passed through the lovely country of the Pays d'Auge, I reached Honfleur on a fine afternoon, intending to cross to Havre the next morning, and embark for England. As I had no better way of passing the evening, I strolled up the hill to enjoy the fine prospect from the chapel of Notre Dame de Grace; and while there I thought of inquiring after the fate of poor Annette Delarbre. The priest who had told me her story was officiating at Vespers, after which I accosted him, and learnt from him the remaining circumstances. He told me that from the time I had seen her at the chapel, her disorder took a sudden turn for the worse, and her health rapidly declined. Her cheerful intervals became shorter and less frequent, and attended with more incoherency. She grew languid, silent, and moody in her melancholy; her form was wasted, her looks were pale and disconsolate, and it was feared she would never recover. She became impatient of all sounds of gayety, and was never so contented as when Eugene's

mother was near her. The good woman watched over her with patient, yearning solicitude; and in seeking to beguile her sorrows, would half forget her own. Sometimes, as she sat looking upon her pallid face, the tears would fill her eyes, which when Annette perceived, she would anxiously wipe them away, and tell her not to grieve, for that Eugene would soon return; and then she would affect a forced gayety, as in former times, and sing a lively air; but a sudden recollection would come over her, and she would burst into tears, hang on the poor mother's neck, and entreat her not to curse her for having destroyed her son.

Just at this time, to the astonishment of every one, news was received of Eugene; who, it appears, was still living. When almost drowned, he had fortunately seized upon a spar washed from the ship's deck. Finding himself nearly exhausted, he fastened himself to it, and floated for a day and night, until all sense left him. On recovering, he found himself on board a vessel bound to India, but so ill as not to move without assistance. His health continued precarious throughout the voyage; on arriving in India, he experienced many vicissitudes, and was transferred from ship to ship, and hospital to hospital. His constitution enabled him to struggle through every hardship; and he was

now in a distant port, waiting only for the sailing of a ship to return home.

Great caution was necessary in imparting these tidings to the mother, and even then she was nearly overcome by the transports of her joy. But how to impart them to Annette was a matter of still greater perplexity. Her state of mind had been so morbid, she had been subject to such violent changes, and the cause of her derangement had been of such an incolsolable and hopeless kind, that her friends had always forborne to tamper with her feelings. They had never even hinted at the subject of her griefs, nor encouraged the theme when she adverted to it, but had passed it over in silence, hoping that time would gradually wear the traces of it from her recollection, or, at least, would render them less painful. They now felt at a loss how to undeceive her, even in her misery, lest the sudden recurrence of happiness might confirm the estrangement of her reason, or might overpower her enfeebled frame. They ventured, however, to probe those wounds which they formerly did not dare to touch, for they now had the balm to pour into them. They led the conversation to those topics which they had hitherto shunned, and endeavored to ascertain the current of her thoughts in those varying moods which had formerly perplexed

them. They found her mind even more affected than they had imagined. All her ideas were confused and wandering. Her bright and cheerful moods, which now grew seldomer than ever, were all the effects of mental delusion. At such times she had no recollection of her lover's having been in danger, but was only anticipating his arrival. "When the winter has passed away," said she, "and the trees put on their blossoms, and the swallow comes back over the sea, he will return." When she was drooping and desponding, it was in vain to remind her of what she had said in her gayer moments, and to assure her that Eugene would indeed return shortly. She wept on in silence and appeared insensible to their words. But at times her agitation became violent, when she would upbraid herself with having driven Eugene from his mother, and brought sorrow on her gray hairs. Her mind admitted but one leading idea at a time, which nothing could avert or efface; or if they ever succeeded in interrupting the current of her fancy, it only became the more incoherent, and increased the feverishness that preyed upon both mind and body. Her friends felt more alarm for her than ever, for they feared her senses were irrevocably gone, and her constitution completely undermined.

In the meantime Eugene returned to the village. He was violently affected when the story of Annette was told him. With bitterness of heart he upbraided his own rashness and infatuation that had hurried him away from her, and accused himself as the author of all her woes. His mother would describe to him all the anguish and remorse of poor Annette; the tenderness with which she clung to her, and endeavored, even in the midst of her insanity, to console her for the loss of her son; and the touching expressions of affection mingled with her most incoherent wanderings of thought, until his feelings would be wound up to agony, and he would entreat her to desist from the recital. They did not dare as yet to bring him into Annette's sight; but he was permitted to see her when she was sleeping. The tears streamed down his sunburnt cheeks as he contemplated the ravages which grief and malady had made; and his heart swelled almost to breaking as he beheld round her neck the very braid of hair which she once gave him in token of girlish affection, and which he had returned to her in anger.

At length the physician that attended her determined to venture upon an experiment; to take advantage of one of those cheerful moods when her mind was visited by hope, and to en-

deavor to engraft, as it were, the reality upon the delusions of her fancy. These moods had now become very rare, for nature was sinking under the continual pressure of her mental malady, and the principle of reaction was daily growing weaker. Every effort was tried to bring on a cheerful interval of the kind. Several of her most favorite companions were kept continually about her; they chatted gaily, they laughed, and sang, and danced; but Annette reclined with languid frame and hollow eye, and took no part in their gayety. At length the winter was gone; the trees put forth their leaves; the swallows began to build in the eaves of the house, and the robin and wren piped all day beneath the window. Annette's spirits gradually revived. She began to deck her person with unusual care; and bringing forth a basket of artificial flowers, went to work to wreathe a bridal chaplet of white roses. Her companions asked why she prepared the chaplet. "What!" said she with a smile, "have you not noticed the trees putting on their wedding-dresses of blossoms? Has not the swallow flown back over the sea? Do you not know that the time is come for Eugene to return? that he will be home to-morrow, and that on Sunday we are to be married?"

Her words were repeated to the physician,

and he seized on them at once. He directed that her idea should be encouraged and acted upon. Her words were echoed through the house. Every one talked of the return of Eugene as a matter of course; they congratulated her upon her approaching happiness, and assisted her in her preparations. The next morning the same theme was resumed. She was dressed out to receive her lover. Every bosom fluttered with anxiety. A cabriolet drove iuto the village. "Eugene is coming!" was the cry. She saw him alight at the door, and rushed with a shriek into his arms.

Her friends trembled for the result of this critical experiment; but she did not sink under it, for her fancy had prepared her for his return. She was as one in a dream, to whom a tide of unlooked-for prosperity, that would have overwhelmed his waking reason, seems but the natural current of circumstances. Her conversation, however, showed that her senses were wandering. There was an absolute forgetfulness of all past sorrow; a wild and feverish gayety that at times was incoherent.

The next morning she awoke languid and exhausted. All the occurrences of the preceding day had passed away from her mind as though they had been the mere illusions of her fancy. She rose melancholy and abstracted, and as

she dressed herself, was heard to sing one of her plaintive ballads. When she entered the parlor her eyes were swollen with weeping. She heard Eugene's voice without, and started; passed her hand across her forehead, and stood musing, like one endeavoring to recall a dream. Eugene entered the room, and advanced towards her; she looked at him with an eager, searching look, murmured some indistinct words, and before he could reach her, sank upon the floor.

She relapsed into a wild and unsettled state of mind; but now that the first shock was over, the physician ordered that Eugene should keep continually in her sight. Sometimes she did not know him; at other times she would talk to him as if he were going to sea, and would implore him not to part from her in anger; and when he was not present, she would speak of him as if buried in the ocean, and would sit, with clasped hands, looking upon the ground, the picture of despair.

As the agitation of her feelings subsided, and her frame recovered from the shock it had received, she became more placid and coherent. Eugene kept almost continually near her. He formed the real object round which her scattered ideas once more gathered, and which linked them once more with the realities

of life. But her changeful disorder now appeared to take a new turn. She became languid and inert, and would sit for hours silent, and almost in a state of lethargy. If roused from this stupor, it seemed as if her mind would made some attempt to follow up a train of thought, but would soon become confused. She would regard every one that approached her with an anxious and inquiring eye, that seemed continually to disappoint itself. Sometimes, as her lover sat holding her hand, she would look pensively in his face without saying a word, until his heart was overcome; and after these transient fits of intellectual exertion, she sould sink again into lethargy.

By degrees this stupor increased; her mind appeared to have subsided into a stagnant and almost deathlike calm. For the greater part of the time her eyes were closed; her face was almost as fixed and passionless as that of a corpse. She no longer took any notice of surrounding objects. There was an awfulness in this tranquillity that filled her friends with apprehensions. The physician ordered that she should be kept perfectly quiet; or that, if she evinced any agitation, she should be gently lulled, like a child, by some favorite tune.

She remained in this state for hours, hardly seeming to breathe, and apparently sinking

into the sleep of death. Her chamber was profoundly still. The attendants moved about it with noiseless tread; every thing was communicated by signs and whispers. Her lover sat by her side watching her with painful anxiety, and fearing every breath which stole from her pale lips would be the last.

At length she heaved a deep sigh; and from some convulsive motions, appeared to be troubled in her sleep. Her agitation increased, accompanied by an indistinct moaning. One of her companions, remembering the physician's instructions, endeavored to lull her by singing, in a low voice, a tender little air, which was a particular favorite of Annette's. Probably it had some connection in her mind with her own story; for every fond girl has some ditty of the kind, linked in her thoughts with sweet and sad remembrances.

As she sang, the agitation of Annette subsided. A streak of faint color came into her cheeks; her eyelids became swollen with rising tears, which trembled there for a moment, and then stealing forth, coursed down her pallid cheek. When the song was ended she opened her eyes, and looked about her, as one awaking in a strange place.

"O Eugene! Eugene!" said she, "it seems as if I have had a long and dismal dream; what

has happened, and what has been the matter with me?"

The questions were embarrassing; and before they could be answered, the physician, who was in the next room, entered. She took him by the hand, looked up in his face, and made the same inquiry. He endeavored to put her off with some evasive answer. "No, no!" cried she, "I know I have been ill, and I have been dreaming strangely. I thought Eugene had left us—and that he had gone to sea—and that —and that he was drowned!—But he *has* been to sea!" added she earnestly, as recollection kept flashing upon her, "and he has been wrecked—and we were all so wretched—and he came home again one bright morning—and, oh!" said she, pressing her hand against her forehead with a sickly smile, "I see how it is, all has not been right here. I begin to recollect — but it is all past now — Eugene is here! and his mother is happy — and we will never — never part again — shall we, Eugene?"

She sunk back in her chair exhausted; the tears streamed down her cheeks. Her companions hovered round her, not knowing what to make of this sudden dawn of reason. Her lover sobbed aloud. She opened her eyes again, and looked upon them with an air of the

sweetest acknowledgment. "You are all so good to me!" said she, faintly.

The physician drew the father aside. "Your daughter's mind is restored," said he; "she is sensible that she has been deranged; she is growing conscious of the past, and conscious of the present. All that now remains is to keep her calm and quiet until her health is reëstablished, and then let her be married, in God's name!"

"The wedding took place," continued the good priest, "but a short time since; they were here at the last fête during their honeymoon, and a handsomer and happier couple was not to be seen as they danced under yonder trees. The young man, his wife, and mother, now live on a fine farm at Pont L'Eveque; and that model of a ship which you see yonder, with white flowers wreathed round it, is Annette's offering of thanks to our Lady of Grace for having listened to her prayers, and protected her lover in the hour of peril."

The captain having finished, there was a momentary silence. The tender-hearted Lady Lillycraft, who knew the story by heart, had led the way in weeping, and indeed often began to shed tears before they came to the right place.

The fair Julia was a little flurried at the pas-

sage where wedding preparations were mentioned; but the auditor most affected was the simple Phœbe Wilkins. She had gradually dropped her work in her lap, and sat sobbing through the latter part of the story, until towards the end, when the happy reverse had nearly produced another scene of hysterics. "Go, take this case to my room again, child," said Lady Lillycraft, kindly, "and don't cry so much."

"I won't, an 't please your ladyship, if I can help it;—but I 'm glad they made all up again, and were married!"

By the way, the case of this lovelorn damsel begins to make some talk in the household, especially among certain little ladies, not far in their teens, of whom she has made confidants. She is a great favorite with them all, but particularly so since she has confided to them her love-secrets. They enter into her concerns with all the violent zeal and overwhelming sympathy with which little boarding-school ladies engage in the politics of a love-affair.

I have noticed them frequently clustering about her in private conferences, or walking up and down the garden terrace, under my window, listening to some long and dolorous story of her afflictions; of which I could now and then distinguish the ever-recurring phrases "says he," and "says she."

I accidentally interrupted one of these little councils of war, when they were all huddled together under a tree, and seemed to be earnestly considering some interesting document. The flutter at my approach showed that there were some secrets under discussion; and I observed the disconsolate Phœbe crumpling into her bosom either a love-letter or an old valentine, and brushing away the tears from her cheeks.

The girl is a good girl, of a soft, melting nature, and shows her concern at the cruelty of her lover only in tears and drooping looks; but with the little ladies who have espoused her cause, it sparkles up into fiery indignation; and I have noticed on Sunday many a glance darted at the pew of the Tibbetses, enough even to melt down the silver buttons on old Ready-Money's jacket.

TRAVELLING.

A citizen, for recreation sake,
To see the country would a journey take
Some dozen mile, or very little more;
Taking his leave with friends two months before
With drinking healths, and shaking by the hand,
As he had travail'd to some new-found land.

DOCTOR MERRIE MAN, 1609.

THE Squire has lately received another shock in the saddle, and been almost unseated by his marplot neighbor, the indefatigable Mr. Faddy, who rides his jog-trot hobby with equal zeal; and is so bent upon improving and reforming the neighborhood, that the Squire thinks, in a little while it will be scarce worth living in. The enormity that has thus discomposed my worthy host is an attempt of the manufacturer to have a line of coaches established, that shall diverge from the old route, and pass through the neigboring village.

I believe I have mentioned that the Hall is situated in a retired part of the country, at a

distance from any great coach-road; insomuch that the arrival of a traveller is apt to make every one look out of the window, and to cause some talk among the ale-drinkers at the little inn. I was at a loss, therefore, to account for the Squire's indignation at a measure apparently fraught with convenience and advantage, until I found that the conveniences of travelling were among his greatest grievances.

In fact, he rails against stage-coaches, post-chaises, and turnpike roads, as serious causes of the corruption of English rural manners. They have given facilities, he says, to every humdrum citizen to trundle his family about the kingdom, and have sent the follies and fashions of town whirling, in coach-loads, to the remotest parts of the island. The whole country, he says, is traversed by these flying cargoes; every by-road is explored by enterprising tourists from Cheapside and the Poultry, and every gentleman's park and lawns invaded by cockney sketchers of both sexes, with portable chairs and portfolios for drawing.

He laments over this as destroying the charm of privacy, and interrupting the quiet of country life; but more especially as affecting the simplicity of the peasantry, and filling their heads with half-city notions. A great coach-inn, he says, is enough to ruin the manners of a whole village.

It creates a horde of sots and idlers ; makes gapers and gazers and newsmongers of the common people, and knowing jockeys of the country bumpkins.

The Squire has something of the old feudal feeling. He looks back with regret to the "good old times," when journeys were only made on horseback, and the extraordinary difficulties of travelling, owing to bad roads, bad accommodations, and highway robbers, seemed to separate each village and hamlet from the rest of the world. The lord of the manor was then a kind of monarch in the little realm around him. He held his court in his paternal hall, and was looked up to with almost as much loyalty and deference as the king himself. Every neighborhood was a little world within itself, having its local manners and customs, its local history and local opinions. The inhabitants were fonder of their homes, and thought less of wandering. It was looked upon as an expedition to travel out of sight of the parish steeple ; and a man that had been to London was a village oracle for the rest of his life.

What a difference between the mode of travelling in those days and at present! At that time, when a gentleman went on a distant visit, he sallied forth like a knight-errant on an enterprise, and every family excursion was a

pageant. How splendid and fanciful must one of those domestic cavalcades have been, where the beautiful dames were mounted on palfreys magnificently caparisoned, with embroidered harness, all tinkling with silver bells; attended by cavaliers richly attired on prancing steeds, and followed by pages and serving-men, as we see them represented in old tapestry. The gentry, as they travelled about in those days, were like moving pictures. They delighted the eyes and awakened the admiration of the common people, and passed before them like superior beings; and indeed they were so; there was a hardy and healthful exercise connected with this equestrian style that made them generous and noble.

In his fondness for the old style of travelling the Squire makes most of his journeys on horseback, though he laments the modern deficiency of incident on the road, from the want of fellow-wayfarers, and the rapidity with which every one else is whirled along in coaches and post-chaises. In the "good old times," on the contrary, a cavalier jogged on through bog and mire, from town to town, and hamlet to hamlet, conversing with friars and franklens, and all other chance companions of the road; beguiling the way with travellers' tales, which then were truly wonderful, for every thing beyond one's neighborhood was full of marvel and romance;

stopping at night at some "hostel," where the bush over the door proclaimed good wine, or a pretty hostess made bad wine palatable; meeting at supper with travellers, or listening to the song or merry story of the host, who was generally a boon companion, and presided at his own board; for, according to old Tusser's "Innholder's Poesie,"

> "At meales my friend who vitleth here
> And sitteth with his host,
> Shall both be sure of better cheere,
> And 'scape with lesser cost."

The Squire is fond, too, of stopping at those inns which may be met with, here and there, in ancient houses of wood and plaster, or calimanco houses, as they are called by antiquaries, with deep porches, diamond-paned bow-windows, panelled rooms, and great fireplaces. He will prefer them to more spacious and modern inns, and would cheerfully put up with bad cheer and bad accommodations in the gratification of his humor. They give him, he says, the feeling of old times, insomuch that he almost expects, in the dusk of the evening, to see some party of weary travellers ride up to the door, with plumes and mantles, trunk-hose, wide boots, and long rapiers.

The good Squire's remarks brought to mind a visit I once paid to the Tabard Inn, famous for

being the place of assemblage whence Chaucer's pilgrims set forth for Canterbury. It is in the borough of Southwark, not far from London Bridge, and bears, at present, the name of "The Talbot." It has sadly declined in dignity since the days of Chaucer, being a mere rendezvous and packing-place of the great wagons that travel into Kent. The courtyard, which was anciently the mustering-place of the pilgrims previous to their departure, was now lumbered with huge wagons. Crates, boxes, hampers, and baskets, containing the good things of town and country, were piled about them ; while, among the straw and litter, the motherly hens scratched and clucked, with their hungry broods at their heels. Instead of Chaucer's motley and splendid throng, I only saw a group of wagoners and stable-boys enjoying a circulating pot of ale; while a long-bodied dog sat by, with head on one side, ear cocked up, and wistful gaze, as if waiting for his turn at the tankard.

Notwithstanding this grievous declension, however, I was gratified at perceiving that the present occupants were not unconscious of the poetical renown of their mansion. An inscription over the gateway proclaimed it to be the inn where Chaucer's pilgrims slept on the night previous to their departure, and at the bottom

of the yard was a magnificent sign, representing them in the act of sallying forth. I was pleased, too, at noticing, that though the present inn was comparatively modern, the form of the old inn was preserved. There were galleries round the yard, as in old times, on which opened the chambers of the guests. To these ancient inns have antiquaries ascribed the present forms of our theatres. Plays were originally acted in the inn-yards. The guests lolled over the galleries, which answered to our modern dress-circle; the critical mob clustered in the yard instead of the pit; and the groups gazing from the garret-windows were no bad representatives of the gods of the shilling gallery. When, therefore, the drama grew important enough to have a house of its own, the architects took a hint for its construction from the yard of the ancient "hostel."

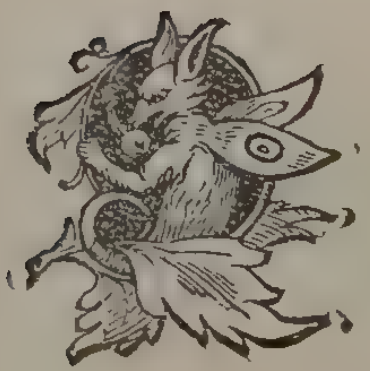
I was so well pleased at finding these remembrances of Chaucer and his poem, that I ordered my dinner in the little parlor of the Talbot. Whilst it was preparing, I sat at the window, musing, and gazing into the courtyard, and conjuring up recollections of the scenes depicted in such lively colors by the poet, until, by degrees, boxes, bales, and hampers, boys, wagoners, and dogs faded from sight, and my fancy peopled the place with the motley throng of

Canterbury pilgrims. The galleries once more swarmed with idle gazers, in the rich dresses of Chaucer's time, and the whole cavalcade seemed to pass before me. There was the stately knight on sober steed, who had ridden in Christendom and heathenesse, and had "foughten for our faith at Tramissene"; —and his son, the young squire, a lover, and a lusty bachelor, with curled locks and gay embroidery; a bold rider, a dancer, and a writer of verses, singing and fluting all day long, and "fresh as the month of May";—and his "knot-headed" yeoman; a bold forester, in green, with horn, and baudrick, and dagger; a mighty bow in hand, and a sheaf of peacock arrows shining beneath his belt;—and the coy, smiling, simple nun, with her gray eyes, her small red mouth and fair forehead, her dainty person clad in featly cloak and "'ypinched wimple," her coral beads about her arm, her golden brooch with a love-motto, and her pretty oath "by Saint Eloy";—and the merchant, solemn in speech and high on horse, with forked beard and "Flaundrished bever hat";—and the lusty monk, "full fat and in good point," with berry-brown palfrey, his hood fastened with gold pin, wrought with a love-knot, his bald head shining like glass, and his face glistening as though it had been annointed; —and the lean, logical, sententious clerk of

Oxenforde, upon his half-starved, scholarlike horse;—and the bowsing sompnour, with fiery-cherub face, all knobbed with pimples, an eater of garlic and onions, and drinker of "strong wine, red as blood," that carried a cake for a buckler, and babbled Latin in his cups; of whose brimstone visage "children were sore afraid";—and the buxom wife of Bath, the widow of five husbands upon her ambling nag, with her hat broad as a buckler, her red stockings and sharp spurs;—and the slender, choleric reeve of Norfolk, bestriding his good gray stot; with close-shaven beard, his hair cropped round his ears; long, lean calfless legs and a rusty blade by his side;—and the jolly Limitour, with lisping tongue and twinkling eye, well beloved of franklens and housewives, a great promoter of marriages among young women, known at the taverns in every town and by every "hosteler and gay tapstere." In short, before I was roused from my reverie by the less poetical, but more substantial apparition of a smoking beefsteak, I had seen the whole cavalcade issue forth from the hostel-gate, with the brawny, double-jointed, red-haired miller, playing the bagpipes before them, and the ancient host of the Tabard giving them his farewell God-send to Canterbury.

When I told the Squire of the existence of

this legitimate descendant of the ancient Tabard Inn, his eyes absolutely glistened with delight. He determined to hunt it up the very first time he visited London, and to eat a dinner there, and drink a cup of mine host's best wine, in memory of old Chaucer. The general, who happened to be present, immediately begged to be of the party, for he liked to encourage these long-established houses, as they are apt to have choice old wines.



POPULAR SUPERSTITIONS.

Farewell rewards and fairies,
  Good housewives now may say;
For now fowle sluts in dairies
  Do fare as well as they:
And though they sweepe their hearths no lesse
  Than maids were wont to doe,
Yet who of late for cleanlinesse
  Finds sixpence in her shooe?

BISHOP CORBET.

I HAVE mentioned the Squire's fondness for the marvellous, and his predilection for legends and romances. His library contains a curious collection of old works of this kind, which bear evident marks of having been much read. In his great love for all that is antiquated, he cherishes popular superstitions, and listens, with very grave attention, to every tale, however strange; so that, through his countenance, the household, and indeed the whole neighborhood, is well stocked with wonderful stories; and if ever a doubt is expressed of any one of them, the narrator will generally observe

that "the Squire thinks there 's something in it."

The Hall of course comes in for its share, the common people having always a propensity to furnish a great superannuated building of the kind with supernatural inhabitants. The gloomy galleries of such old family mansions; the stately chambers, adorned with grotesque carvings and faded paintings; the sounds that vaguely echo about them; the moaning of the wind; the cries of rooks and ravens from the trees and chimney-tops; all produce a state of mind favorable to superstitious fancies.

In one chamber of the Hall, just opposite a door which opens upon a dusky passage, there is a full-length portrait of a warrior in armor. When, on suddenly turning into the passage, I have caught a sight of the portrait, thrown into strong relief by the dark panelling against which it hangs, I have more than once been startled, as though it were a figure advancing towards me.

To superstitious minds, therefore, predisposed by the strange and melancholy stories connected with family paintings, it needs but little stretch of fancy, on a moonlight night, or by the flickering light of a candle, to set the old pictures on the walls in motion, sweeping in their robes and trains about the galleries.

The Squire confesses that he used to take a pleasure in his younger days in setting marvellous stories afloat, and connecting them with the lonely and peculiar places of the neighborhood. Whenever he read any legend of a striking nature, he endeavored to transplant it, and give it a local habitation among the scenes of his boyhood. Many of these stories took root, and he says he is often amused with the odd shapes in which they come back to him in some old woman's narrative, after they have been circulating for years among the peasantry, and undergoing rustic additions and amendments. Among these may doubtless be numbered that of the crusader's ghost, which I have mentioned in the account of my Christmas visit; and another about the hard-riding squire of yore, the family Nimrod, who is sometimes heard on stormy winter nights, galloping, with hound and horn, over a wild moor a few miles distant from the Hall. This I apprehend to have had its origin in the famous story of the wild huntsman, the favorite goblin in German tales; though, by the by, as I was talking on the subject with Master Simon, the other evening in the dark avenue, he hinted that he had himself once or twice heard odd sounds at night, very like a pack of hounds in cry; and that once, as he was returning rather late from a hunting-

dinner, he had seen a strange figure galloping along this same moor; but as he was riding rather fast at the time, and in a hurry to get home, he did not stop to ascertain what it was.

Popular superstitions are fast fading away in England, owing to the general diffusion of knowledge, and the bustling intercourse kept up throughout the country;—still they have their strongholds and lingering places, and a retired neighborhood like this is apt to be one of them. The parson tells me that he meets with many traditional beliefs and notions among the common people, which he has been able to draw from them in the course of familiar conversation, though they are rather shy of avowing them to strangers, and particularly to "the gentry," who are apt to laugh at them. He says there are several of his old parishioners who remember when the village had its bar-guest, or bar-ghost; a spirit supposed to belong to a town or village, and to predict any impending misfortune by midnight shrieks and wailings. The last time it was heard was just before the death of Mr. Bracebridge's father, who was much beloved throughout the neighborhood; though there are not wanting some obstinate unbelievers, who insisted that it was nothing but the howling of a watch-dog. I have been greatly delighted, how-

ever, at meeting with some traces of my old favorite, Robin Goodfellow, though under a different appellation from any of those by which I have heretofore heard him called. The parson assures me that many of the peasantry believe in household goblins, called Dobbies, which live about particular farms and houses, in the same way that Robin Goodfellow did of old. Sometimes they haunt the barns and outhouses, and now and then will assist the farmer wonderfully, by getting in all his hay or corn in a single night. In general, however, they prefer to live within doors, and are fond of keeping about the great hearths, and basking at night, after the family have gone to bed, by the glowing embers. When put in particular good humor by the warmth of their lodgings, and the tidiness of the housemaids, they will overcome their natural laziness, and do a vast deal of household work before morning; churning the cream, brewing the beer, or spinning all the good dame's flax. All this is precisely the conduct of Robin Goodfellow, described so charmingly by Milton:

"Tells how the drudging goblin sweat
To earn his cream-bowl duly set,
When in one night, ere glimpse of morn,
His shadowy flail had threshed the corn
That ten day laborers could not end;

Then lays him down the lubber-fiend,
And stretch'd out all the chimney's length,
Basks at the fire his hairy strength,
And crop-full, out of door he flings
Ere the first cock his matin rings."

But beside these household Dobbies, there are others of a more gloomy and unsocial nature, which keep about lonely barns, at a distance from any dwelling-house, or about ruins and old bridges. These are full of mischievous, and often malignant tricks, and are fond of playing pranks upon benighted travellers. There is a story, among the old people, of one which haunted a ruined mill, just by a bridge that crosses a small stream; how that late one night, as a traveller was passing on horseback, the goblin jumped up behind him, and grasped him so close round the body that he had no power to help himself, but expected to be squeezed to death; luckily his heels were loose, with which he plied the sides of his steed, and was carried, with the wonderful instinct of a traveller's horse, straight to the village inn. Had the inn been at any greater distance, there is no doubt but he would have been strangled to death; as it was, the good people were a long time in bringing him to his senses, and it was remarked that the first sign he showed of returning consciousness was to call for a bottom of brandy.

These mischievous Dobbies bear much resemblance in their natures and habits to the sprites which Heywood, in his "Hierarchie," calls pugs or hobgoblins.

"Their dwellings be
In corners of old houses least frequented,
Or beneath stacks of wood, and these converted,
Make fearful noise in butteries and in dairies;
Robin Goodfellow some, some call them fairies,
In solitaire rooms these uprores keep,
And beate at doores to wake men from their slepe,
Seeming to force lockes, be they nere so strong,
And keeping Christmasse gambols all night long.
Pots, glasses, trenchers, dishes, pannes, and kettles
They will make dance about the shelves and settles.
As if about the kitchen tost and cast,
Yet in the morning nothing found misplac't.
Others such houses to their use have fitted
In which base murthers have been once committed.
Some have their fearful habitations taken
In desolate houses, ruin'd and forsaken."

In the account of our unfortunate hawking expedition, I mentioned an instance of one of these sprites supposed to haunt the ruined grange that stands in a lonely meadow, and has a remarkable echo. The parson informs me, also, of a belief once very prevalent, that a household Dobbie kept about the old farm-house of the Tibbetses. It has long been traditional, he says, that one of these good-natured goblins is attached to the Tibbets family, and came

with them when they moved into this part of the country; for it is one of the peculiarities of these household sprites that they attach themselves to the fortunes of certain families, and follow them in all their removals.

There is a large old-fashioned fireplace in the farm-house, which affords fine quarters for a chimney-corner sprite that likes to lie warm,—especially as Ready-Money Jack keeps up rousing fires in the winter time. The old people of the village recollect many stories about this goblin, current in their young days. It was thought to have brought good luck to the house, and to be the reason why the Tibbetses were always beforehand in the world, and why their farm was always in better order, their hay got in sooner, and their corn better stacked than that of their neighbors. The present Mrs. Tibbets, at the time of her courtship, had a number of these stories told her by the country gossips, and when married was a little fearful about living in a house where such a hobgoblin was said to haunt. Jack, however, who has always treated this story with great contempt, assured her that there was no spirit kept about his house that he could not at any time lay in the Red Sea with one flourish of his cudgel. Still his wife has never got completely over her notions on the subject; but has a horse-shoe

nailed on the threshold, and keeps a branch of rauntry, or mountain-ash, with its red berries, suspended from one of the great beams in the parlor,—a sure protection from all evil spirits.

These stories, as I before observed, are fast fading away, and in another generation or two will probably be completely forgotten. There is something, however, about these rural superstitions extremely pleasing to the imagination, particularly those which relate to the good-humored race of household demons, and indeed to the whole fairy mythology. The English have given an inexpressible charm to these superstitions, by the manner in which they have associated them with whatever is most homefelt and delightful in nature. I do not know a more fascinating race of beings than these little fabled people who haunted the southern sides of hills and mountains; lurked in flowers and about fountain-heads; glided through keyholes into ancient halls; watched over farm-houses and dairies; danced on the green by summer moonlight, and on the kitchen hearth in winter. They accord with the nature of English housekeeping and English scenery. I always have them in mind when I see a fine old English mansion, with its wide hall and spacious kitchen, or a venerable farm-house, in which there is so much fireside comfort and good housewifery.

There was something of national character in their love of order and cleanliness; in the vigilance with which they watched over the economy of the kitchen, and the functions of the servants, munificently rewarding, with silver sixpence in shoe, the tidy housemaid, but venting their direful wrath, in midnight bobs and pinches, upon the sluttish dairymaid. I think I can trace the good effects of this ancient fairy sway over household concerns in the care that prevails to the present day among English housemaids to put their kitchens in order before they go to bed.

I have said that these fairy superstitions accord with the nature of English scenery. They suit these small landscapes, which are divided by honeysuckle hedges into sheltered fields and meadows; where the grass is mingled with daisies, buttercups, and harebells. When I first found myself among English scenery, I was continually reminded of the sweet pastoral images which distinguish their fairy mythology; and when for the first time a circle in the grass was pointed out to me as one of the rings where they were formerly supposed to have held their moonlight revels, it seemed for a moment as if fairyland were no longer a fable. Brown, in his "Britannia's Pastorals," gives a picture of the kind of scenery to which I allude:

"A pleasant mead
Where fairies often did their measures tread;
Which in the meadows make such circles green
As if with garlands it had crowned been.
Within one of these rounds was to be seen
A hillock rise, where oft the fairy queen
At twilight sat."

And there is another picture of the same, in a poem ascribed to Ben Jonson:

"By wells and rills in meadows green,
We nightly dance our hey-dey guise,
And to our fairy king and queen
We chant our moonlight minstrelsies."

Indeed, it seems to me, that the older British poets, with that true feeling for nature which distinguishes them, have closely adhered to the simple and familiar imagery which they found in these popular superstitions; and have thus given to their fairy mythology those continual allusions to the farm-house and the dairy, the green meadow and the fountain-head, which fill our minds with the delightful associations of rural life. It is curious to observe how the most beautiful fictions have their origin among the rude and ignorant. There is an indescribable charm about the illusions with which the chimerical ignorance once clothed every subject. These twilight views of nature are often more captivating than any which are revealed by the

rays of enlightened philosophy. The most accomplished and poetical minds, therefore have been fain to search back into the accidental conceptions of what are termed barbarous ages, and to draw from them their finest imagery and machinery. If we look through our most admired poets, we shall find that their minds have been impregnated by these popular fancies, and that those have succeeded best who have adhered closest to the simplicity of their rustic originals. Such is the case with Shakespeare in his "Midsummer-Night's Dream," which so minutely describes the employments and amusements of fairies, and embodies all the notions concerning them which were current among the vulgar. It is this that poetry in England has echoed back every rustic note, softened into perfect melody; it is this that has spread its charms over every-day life, displacing nothing; taking things as it found them, but tinting them up with its own magical hues, until every green hill and fountain-head, every fresh meadow, nay, every humble flower, is full of song and story.

I am dwelling too long, perhaps, upon a threadbare subject; yet it brings up with it a thousand delicious recollections of those happy days of childhood, when the imperfect knowledge I have since obtained had not yet dawned

upon my mind, and when a fairy-tale was true history to me. I have often been so transported by the pleasure of these recollections, as almost to wish I had been born in the days when the fictions of poetry were believed. Even now I cannot look upon these fanciful creations of ignorance and credulity, without a lurking re-regret that they have all passed away. The experience of my early days tells me they were sources of exquisite delight; and I sometimes question whether the naturalist who can dissect the flowers of the field receives half the pleasure from contemplating them that he did who considered them the abodes of elves and fairies. I feel convinced that the true interests and solid happiness of man are promoted by the advancement of truth; yet I cannot but mourn over the pleasant errors which it has trampled down in its progress. The fauns and sylphs, the household sprites, the moonlight revel, Oberon, Queen Mab, and the delicious realms of fairy-land, all vanish before the light of true philosophy; but who does not sometimes turn with distaste from the cold realities of morning, and seek to recall the sweet visions of the night?

THE CULPRIT.

From fire, from water, and all things amiss,
Deliver the house of an honest justice.
THE WIDOW.

THE serenity of the Hall has been suddenly interrupted by a very important occurrence. In the course of this morning a posse of villagers was seen trooping up the avenue, with boys shouting in advance. As it drew near we perceived Ready-Money Jack Tibbets striding along, wielding his cudgel in one hand, and with the other grasping the collar of a tall fellow, whom, on still nearer approach, we recognized for the redoubtable gypsy hero, Starlight Tom. He was now, however, completely cowed and crestfallen, and his courage seemed to have quailed in the iron gripe of the lion-hearted Jack.

The whole gang of gypsy women and children came draggling in the rear; some in tears, others making a violent clamor about the ears of old Ready-Money, who, however, trudged on in silence with his prey, heeding their abuse as

little as a hawk that has pounced upon a barn-door hero regards the outcries and cacklings of his whole feathered seraglio.

He had passed through the villlage on his way to the Hall, and of course had made a great sensation in that most excitable place, where every event is a matter of gaze and gossip. The report flew like wildfire, that Starlight Tom was in custody. The ale-drinkers forthwith abandoned the tap-room; Slingsby's school broke loose, and master and boys swelled the tide that come rolling at the heels of old Ready-Money and his captive.

The uproar increased as they approached the Hall; it aroused the whole garrison of dogs, and the crew of hangers-on. The great mastiff barked from the dog-house; the staghound and the greyhound, and the spaniel issued barking from the hall-door, and my Lady Lillycraft's little dogs ramped and barked from the parlor-window. I remarked, however, that the gypsy dogs made no reply to all these menaces and insults, but crept close to the gang, looking round with a guilty, poaching air, and now and then glancing up a dubious eye to their owners; which shows that the moral dignity, even of dogs, may be ruined by bad company!

When the throng reached the front of the house they were brought to a halt by a kind of

advanced guard, composed of old Christy the gamekeeper and two or three servants of the house, who had been brought out by the noise. The common herd of the village fell back with respect; the boys were driven back by Christy and his compeers; while Ready-Money Jack maintained his ground and his hold of the prisoner, and was surrounded by the tailor, the schoolmaster, and several other dignitaries of the village, and by the clamorous brood of gypsies, who were neither to be silenced nor intimidated.

By this time the whole household were brought to the doors and windows, and the Squire to the portal. An audience was demanded by Ready-Money Jack, who had detected the prisoner in the very act of sheep-stealing on his domains, and had borne him off to be examined before the Squire, who was in the commission of the peace.

A kind of tribunal was immediately held in the servants' hall, a large chamber, with a stone floor, and a long table in the centre, at one end of which, just under an enormous clock, was placed the Squire's chair of justice, while Master Simon took his place at the table as clerk of the court. An attempt had been made by old Christy to keep out the gypsy gang, but in vain, and they, with the village worthies, and

the household, half filled the hall. The old housekeeper and the butler were in a panic at this dangerous irruption. They hurried away all the valuable things and portable articles that were at hand, and even kept a dragon watch on the gypsies, lest they should carry off the house-clock, or the deal table.

Old Christy, and his faithful coadjutor the gamekeeper, acted as constables to guard the prisoner, triumphing in having at last got this terrible offender in their clutches. Indeed, I am inclined to think the old man bore some peevish recollection of having been handled rather roughly by the gypsy in the chance-medley affair of May-day.

Silence was now commanded by Master Simon, but it was difficult to be enforced in such a motley assemblage. There was a continual snarling and yelping of dogs, and as fast as it was quelled in one corner it broke out in another. The poor gypsy curs, who, like errant thieves, could not hold up their heads in an honest house, were worried and insulted by the gentlemen dogs of the establishment, without offering to make resistance; the very curs of my Lady Lillycraft bullied them with impunity.

The examination was conducted with great mildness and indulgence by the Squire, partly

from the kindness of his nature, and partly, I suspect, because his heart yearned towards the culprit, who had found great favor in his eyes, as I have already observed, from the skill he had at various times displayed in archery, morris-dancing, and other obsolete accomplishments. Proofs, however, were too strong. Ready-Money Jack told his story in a straightforward independent way, nothing daunted by the presence in which he found himself. He had suffered from various depredations on his sheepfold and poultry-yard, and had at length kept watch and caught the delinquent in the very act of making off with a sheep on his shoulders.

Tibbets was repeatedly interrupted, in the course of his testimoney, by the culprit's mother, a furious old beldame, with an insufferable tongue, and who, in fact, was several times kept, with some difficulty, from flying at him tooth and nail. The wife, too, of the prisoner, whom I am told he does not beat above half a dozen times a week, completely interested Lady Lillycraft in her husband's behalf, by her tears and supplications; and several of the other gypsy women were awakening strong sympathy among the young girls and maid-servants in the background. The pretty black-eyed gypsy girl, whom I have mentioned on a

former occasion as the sibyl that read the fortunes of the general, endeavored to wheedle that doughty warrior into their interests, and even made some approaches to her old acquaintance, Master Simon; but was repelled by the latter with all the dignity of office, having assumed a look of gravity and importance suitable to the occasion.

I was a little surprised, at first, to find honest Slingsby, the schoolmaster, rather opposed to his old crony Tibbets, and coming forward as a kind of advocate for the accused. It seems that he had taken compassion on the forlorn fortunes of Starlight Tom, and had been trying his eloquence in his favor the whole way from the village, but without effect. During the examination of Ready-Money Jack, Slingsby had stood like "dejected pity at his side," seeking every now and then, by a soft word, to soothe any exacerbation of his ire, or to qualify any harsh expression. He now ventured to make a few observations to the Squire in palliation of the delinquent's offence; but poor Slingsby spoke more from the heart than the head, and was evidently actuated merely by a general sympathy for every poor devil in trouble, and a liberal toleration for all kinds of vagabond existence.

The ladies, too, large and small, with the

kindheartedness of the sex, were zealous on the side of mercy, and interceded strenuously with the Squire; insomuch that the prisoner, finding himself unexpectedly surrounded by active friends, once more reared his crest, and seemed disposed for a time to put on the air of injured innocence. The Squire, however, with all his benevolence of heart, and his lurking weakness towards the prisoner, was too conscientious to swerve from the strict path of justice. Abundant concurring testimony made the proof of guilt incontrovertible, and Starlight Tom's mittimus was made out accordingly.

The sympathy of the ladies was now greater than ever; they even made some attempts to mollify the ire of Ready-Money Jack; but that sturdy potentate had been too much incensed by the repeated incursions into his territories by the predatory band of Starlight Tom, and he was resolved, he said, to drive the "varmint reptiles" out of the neighborhood. To avoid all further importunities, as soon as the mittimus was made out, he girded up his loins, and strode back to his seat of empire, accompanied by his interceding friend, Slingsby, and followed by a detachment of the gypsy gang, who hung on his rear, assailing him with mingled prayers and execrations.

The question now was, how to dispose of the

prisoner; a matter of great moment in this peaceful establishment, where so formidable a character as Starlight Tom was like a hawk entrapped in a dove-cote. As the hubbub and examination had occupied a considerable time, it was too late in the day to send him to the county prison, and that of the village was sadly out of repair, from long want of occupation. Old Christy, who took great interest in the affair, proposed that the culprit should be committed for the night to an upper loft of a kind of tower in one of the out-houses, where he and the gamekeeper would mount guard. After much deliberation, this measure was adopted; the premises in question were examined and made secure, and Christy and his trusty ally, the one armed with a fowling-piece, the other with an ancient blunderbuss, turned out as sentries to keep watch over this donjon-keep.

Such is the momentous affair that has just taken place, and it is an event of too great moment in this quiet little world not to turn it completely topsy-turvy. Labor is at a stand. The house has been a scene of confusion the whole evening. It has been beleaguered by gypsy women, with their children on their backs, wailing and lamenting; while the old virago of a mother has cruised up and down the lawn in front, shaking her head and mut-

tering to herself, or now and then breaking into a paroxysm of rage, brandishing her fist at the Hall, and denouncing ill luck upon Ready-Money Jack, and even upon the Squire himself.

Lady Lillycraft has given repeated audiences to the culprit's weeping wife, at the Hall-door; and the servant-maids have stolen out to confer with the gypsy women under the trees. As to the little ladies of the family, they are all outrageous at Ready-Money Jack, whom they look upon in the light of a tyrannical giant of fairy-tale. Phœbe Wilkins, contrary to her usual nature, is the only one pitiless in the affair. She thinks Mr. Tibbets quite in the right; and thinks the gypsies deserve to be punished severely for meddling with the sheep of the Tibbetses.

In the meantime the females of the family evinced all the provident kindness of the sex, ever ready to soothe and succor the distressed, right or wrong. Lady Lillycraft has had a mattress taken to the out-house, and comforts and delicacies of all kinds have been taken to the prisoner; even the little girls have sent their cakes and sweetmeats; so that, I'll warrant, the vagabond has never fared so well in his life before. Old Christy, it is true, looks upon every thing with a wary eye; struts about with his blunderbuss with the air of a veteran

campaigner, and will hardly allow himself to be spoken to. The gypsy women dare not come within gunshot, and every tatterdemalion of a boy has been frightened from the park. The old fellow is determined to lodge Starlight Tom in prison with his own hands; and hopes, he says, to see one of the poaching crew made an example of.

I doubt, after all, whether the worthy Squire is not the greatest sufferer in the whole affair. His honorable sense of duty obliges him to be rigid, but the overflowing kindness of his nature makes this a grievous trial to him.

He is not accustomed to have such demands upon his justice in his truly patriarchal domain; and it wounds his benevolent spirit, that, while prosperity and happiness are flowing in thus bounteously upon him, he should have to inflict misery upon a fellow-being.

He has been troubled and cast down the whole evening; took leave of the family, on going to bed, with a sigh, instead of his usual hearty and affectionate tone; and will, in all probability, have a far more sleepless night than his prisoner. Indeed, this unlucky affair has cast a damp upon the whole household, as there appears to be a universal opinion that the unlucky culprit will come to the gallows.

Morning.—The clouds of last evening are all

blown over. A load has been taken from the Squire's heart, and every face is once more in smiles. The gamekeeper made his appearance at an early hour, completely shamefaced and crestfallen. Starlight Tom had made his escape in the night; how he got out of the loft, no one could tell; the Devil, they think, must have assisted him. Old Christy was so mortified that he would not show his face, but had shut himself up in his stronghold at the dog-kennel, and would not be spoken with. What has particularly relieved the Squire is, that there is very little likelihood of the culprit's being retaken, having gone off on one of the old gentleman's best hunters.

FAMILY MISFORTUNES.

The night has been unruly : where we lay,
The chimneys were blown down.

MACBETH.

WE have for a day or two past had a flaw of unruly weather, which has intruded itself into this fair and flowery month, and for a time quite marred the beauty of the landscape. Last night the storm attained its crisis ; the rain beat in torrents against the casements, and the wind piped and blustered about the old Hall with quite a wintry vehemence. The morning, however, dawned clear and serene ; the face of the heavens seemed as if newly washed, and the sun shone with a brightness undimmed by a single vapor. Nothing overhead gave traces of the recent storm ; but on looking from my window I beheld sad ravage among the shrubs and flowers ; the garden-walks had formed the channels for little torrents ; trees were lopped of their branches, and a small silver stream which

wound through the park, and ran at the bottom of the lawn, had swelled into a turbid, yellow sheet of water.

In an establishment like this, where the mansion is vast, ancient, and somewhat afflicted with the infirmities of age, and where there are numerous and extensive dependencies, a storm is an event of a very grave nature, and brings in its train a multiplicity of cares and disasters.

While the Squire was taking his breakfast in the great hall, he was continually interrupted by bearers of ill tidings from some part or other of his domains; he appeared to me like the commander of a besieged city, after some grand assault, receiving at his head-quarters reports of damages sustained in the various quarters of the place. At one time the housekeeper brought him intelligence of a chimney blown down, and a desperate leak sprung in the roof over the picture-gallery, which threatened to obliterate a whole generation of his ancestors. Then the steward came in with a doleful story of the mischief done in the woodlands; while the gamekeeper bemoaned the loss of one of his finest bucks, whose bloated carcass was seen floating along the swollen current of the river.

When the Squire issued forth, he was accosted, before the door, by the old, paralytic gardener, with a face full of trouble, reporting, as

I supposed, the devastation of his flower-beds, and the destruction of his wall-fruit. I remarked, however, that his intelligence caused a peculiar expression of concern not only with the Squire and Master Simon, but with the fair Julia and Lady Lillycraft, who happened to be present. From a few words which reached my ear, I found there was some tale of domestic calamity in the case, and that some unfortunate family had been rendered houseless by the storm. Many ejaculations of pity broke from the ladies; I heard the expressions of "poor helpless beings," and "unfortunate little creatures," several times repeated; to which the old gardener replied by very melancholy shakes of the head.

I felt so interested, that I could not help calling to the gardener, as he was retiring, and asking what unfortunate family it was that had suffered so severely. The old man touched his hat, and gazed at me for an instant, as if hardly comprehending my question. "Family!" replied he, "there be no family in the case, your honor; but here have been sad mischief done in the rookery!"

I had noticed the day before that the high and gusty winds had occasioned great disquiet among these airy householders; their nests being all filled with young, who were in danger of being tilted out of their tree-rocked cradles.

Indeed, the old birds themselves seemed to have hard work to maintain a foothold; some kept hovering and cawing in the air; or if they ventured to alight, had to hold fast, flap their wings, and spread their tails, and thus remain see-sawing on the topmost twigs.

In the course of the night, however, an awful calamity had taken place in this most sage and politic community. There was a great tree, the tallest in the grove, which seemed to have been the kind of court-end of the metropolis, and crowded with the residences of those whom Master Simon considers the nobility and gentry. A decayed limb of this tree had given way with the violence of the storm, and came down with all its air-castles.

One should be well aware of the humors of the good Squire and his household, to understand the general concern expressed at this disaster. It was quite a public calamity in this rural empire, and all seemed to feel for the poor rooks as for fellow-citizens in distress.

The ground had been strewed with the callow young, which were now cherished in the aprons and bosoms of the maid-servants, and the little ladies of the family. I was pleased with this touch of nature, this feminine sympathy in the sufferings of the offspring and the maternal anxiety of the parent birds.

It was interesting, too, to witness the general agitation and distress prevalent throughout the feathered community; the common cause that was made of it; and the incessant hovering, and fluttering, and lamenting, in the whole rookery. There is a chord of sympathy that runs through the whole feathered race as to any misfortunes of the young; and the cries of a wounded bird in the breeding season will throw a whole grove in a flutter and an alarm. Indeed, why should I confine it to the feathered tribe? Nature has implanted an exquisite sympathy on this subject, which extends through all her works. It is an invariable attribute of the female heart to melt at the cry of early helplessness, and to take an instinctive interest in the distresses of the parent and its young. On the present occasion the ladies of the family were full of pity and commiseration; and I shall never forget the look that Lady Lillycraft gave the general, on his observing that the young birds would make an excellent curry, or an especial good rook-pie.

LOVERS' TROUBLES.

The poor soul sat singing by a sycamore tree,
  Sing all a green willow ;
Her hand on her bosom, her head on her knee,
  Sing willow, willow, willow :
Sing all a green willow must be my garland.

OLD SONG.

THE fair Julia having nearly recovered from the effects of her hawking disaster, it begins to be thought high time to appoint a day for the wedding. As every domestic event in a venerable and aristocratic family connection like this is a matter of moment, the fixing upon this important day has, of course, given rise to much conference and debate.

Some light difficulties and demurs have lately sprung up, originating in the peculiar humors prevalent at the Hall. Thus, I have overheard a very solemn consultation between Lady Lillycraft, the parson, and Master Simon, as to whether the marriage ought not to be postponed until the coming month.

With all the charms of the flowery month of May, there is, I find, an ancient prejudice against it as a marrying month. An old proverb says, "To wed in May is to wed poverty." Now, as Lady Lillycraft is very much given to believe in lucky and unlucky times and seasons, and indeed is very superstitious on all points relating to the tender passion, this old proverb has taken great hold upon her mind. She recollects two or three instances in her own knowledge of matches that took place in this month, and proved very unfortunate. Indeed, an own cousin of hers, who married on a May-day, lost her husband by a fall from his horse, after they had lived happily together for twenty years.

The parson appeared to give great weight to her ladyship's objections, and acknowledged the existence of a prejudice of the kind, not merely confined to modern times, but prevalent likewise among the ancients. In confirmation of this he quoted a passage from Ovid, which had a great effect on Lady Lillycraft, being given in a language which she did not understand. Even Master Simon was staggered by it, for he listened with a puzzled air; and then, shaking his head, sagaciously observed, that Ovid was certainly a very wise man.

From this sage conference I likewise gathered several other important pieces of information

relative to weddings; such as that, if two were celebrated in the same church, on the same day, the first would be happy, the second unfortunate. If, on going to church, the bridal party should meet the funeral of a female, it was an omen that the bride would die first; if of a male, the bridegroom. If the newly married couple were to dance together on their wedding-day, the wife would henceforth rule the roast; with many other curious and unquestionable facts of the same nature; all which made me ponder more than ever upon the perils which surround this happy state, and the thoughtless ignorance of mortals as to the awful risk they run in venturing upon it. I abstain, however, from enlarging upon this topic, having no inclination to promote the increase of bachelors.

Notwithstanding the due weight which the Squire gives to traditional saws and ancient opinions, I am happy to find that he makes a firm stand for the credit of this loving month, and brings to his aid a whole legion of poetical authorities; all which, I presume, have been conclusive with the young couple as I understand they are perfectly willing to marry in May, and abide the consequences. In a few days, therefore, the wedding is to take place, and the Hall is in a buzz of anticipation. The

housekeeper is bustling about from morning till night, with a look full of business and importance, having a thousand arrangements to make, the Squire intending to keep open house on the occasion; and as to the housemaids, you cannot look one of them in the face, but the rogue begins to color up and simper.

While, however, this leading love-affair is going on with a tranquillity quite inconsistent with the rules of romance, I cannot say that the underplots are equally propitious. The "opening bud of love" between the general and Lady Lillycraft seems to have experienced some blight in the course of this genial season. I do not think the general has ever been able to retrieve the ground he lost, when he fell asleep during the captain's story. Indeed, Master Simon thinks his case is completely desperate, her ladyship having determined that he is quite destitute of sentiment.

The season has been equally unpropitious to the lovelorn Phœbe Wilkins. I fear the reader will be impatient at having this humble amour so often alluded to; but I confess I am apt to take a great interest in the love-troubles of simple girls of this class. Few poople have an idea of the world of care and perplexity these poor damsels have in managing the affairs of the heart.

We talk and write about the tender passion; we give it all the colorings of sentiment and romance, and lay the scene of its influence in high life; but, after all, I doubt whether its sway is not more absolute among females of an humbler sphere. How often, could we but look into the heart, should we find the sentiment throbbing in all its violence, in the bosom of the poor lady's-maid, rather than in that of the brilliant beauty she is decking out for the conquest; whose brain is probably bewildered with beaux, ball-rooms, and wax-light chandeliers.

With these humble beings love is an honest, engrossing concern. They have no ideas of settlements, establishments, equipages, and pin-money. The heart—the heart is all-in-all with them, poor things! There is seldom one of them but has her love-cares, and love-secrets; her doubts, and hopes, and fears are equal to those of any heroine of romance, and ten times as sincere. And then, too, there is her secret hoard of love-documents;—the broken sixpence, the gilded brooch, the lock of hair, the unintelligible love-scrawl, all treasured up in her box of Sunday finery, for private contemplation.

How many crosses and trials is she exposed to from some lynx-eyed dame, or staid old ves-

tal of a mistress, who keeps a dragon watch over her virtue, and scouts the lover from the door. But then, how sweet are the little love-scenes, snatched at distant intervals of holiday, and fondly dwelt on through many a long day of household labor and confinement! If in the country—it is the dance at the fair or wake, the interview in the churchyard after service, or the evening stroll in the green lane. If in town, it is perhaps merely a stolen moment of delicious talk between the bars of the area, fearful every instant of being seen; and then, how lightly will the simple creature carol all day afterwards at her labor!

Poor baggage! after all her crosses and difficulties, when she marries, what is it but to exchange a life of comparative ease and comfort for one of toil and uncertainty? Perhaps, too, the lover for whom in the fondness of her nature she has committed herself to fortune's freaks, turns out a worthless churl, the dissolute, heard-hearted husband of low-life; who, taking to the ale-house, leaves her to a cheerless home, to labor, penury, and child-bearing.

When I see poor Phœbe going about with drooping eye, and her head hanging "all o' one side" I cannot help calling to mind the pathetic little picture drawn by Desdemona:—

"My mother had a maid called Barbara;
She was in love; and he she loved proved mad,
And did forsake her; she had a song of willow,
An old thing 't was; but it express'd her fortune,
And she died singing it."

I hope, however, that a better lot is in reserve for Phœbe Wilkins, and that she may yet "rule the roast" in the ancient empire of the Tibbetses! She is not fit to battle with hard hearts or hard times. She was, I am told, the pet of her poor mother, who was proud of the beauty of her child, and brought her up more tenderly than a village girl ought to be; and ever since she has been left an orphan, the good ladies of the Hall have completed the softening and spoiling of her.

I have recently observed her holding long conferences in the churchyard, and up and down one of the lanes near the village, with Slingsby the schoolmaster. I at first thought the pedagogue might be touched with the tender malady so prevalent in these parts of late; but I did him injustice. Honest Slingsby, it seems, was a friend and crony of her late father, the parish clerk; and is on intimate terms with the Tibbets family; prompted, therefore, by his good-will towards all parties, and secretly instigated, perhaps, by the managing dame Tibbets, he had undertaken to talk with Phœbe upon the

subject. He gives her, however, but little encouragement. Slingsby has a formidable opinion of the aristocratical feeling of old Ready-Money and thinks, if Phœbe were even to make the matter up with the son, she would find the father totally hostile to the match. The poor damsel, therefore, is reduced almost to despair; and Slingsby, who is too good-natured not to sympathize in her distress, has advised her to give up all thoughts of young Jack, and has proposed as a substitute his learned coadjutor, the prodigal son. He has even, in the fulness of his heart, offered to give up the schoolhouse to them; though it would leave him once more adrift in the wide world.

THE HISTORIAN.

Hermione. Pray you sit by us,
And tell 's a tale.
Mamilius. Merry or sad shall 't be?
Hermione. As merry as you will.
Mamilius. A sad tale 's best for winter.
I have one of sprites and goblins.
Hermione. Let 's have that, sir.

WINTER'S TALE.

AS this is a story-telling age, I have been tempted occasionally to give the reader one of the many tales served up with supper at the Hall. I might, indeed, have furnished a series almost equal in number to the "Arabian Nights"; but some were rather hackneyed and tedious; others I did not feel warranted in betraying into print; and many more were of the old general's relating, and turned principally upon tiger-hunting, elephant-riding, and Seringapatam, enlivened by the wonderful deeds of Tippoo Saib, and the excellent jokes of Major Pendergast.

I had all along maintained a quiet post at a corner of the table, where I had been able to indulge my humor undisturbed; listening atten-

tively when the story was very good, and dozing a little when it was rather dull, which I consider the perfection of auditorship.

I was roused the other evening from a slight trance, into which I had fallen during one of the general's histories, by a sudden call from the Squire to furnish some entertainment of the kind in my turn. Having been so profound a listener to others, I could not in conscience refuse; but neither my memory nor invention being ready to answer so unexpected a demand, I begged leave to read a manuscript tale from the pen of my fellow-countryman, the late Mr. Diedrich Knickerbocker, the historian of New York. As this ancient chronicler may not be better known to my readers than he was to the company at the Hall, a word or two concerning him may not be amiss, before proceeding to his manuscript.

Diedrich Knickerbocker was a native of New York, a descendant from one of the ancient Dutch families which originally settled that province, and remained there after it was taken possession of by the English in 1664. The descendants of these Dutch families still remain in villages and neighborhoods in various parts of the country, retaining, with singular obstinancy, the dresses, manners, and even language of their ancestors, and forming a very distinct and curi-

ous feature in the motley population of the State. In a hamlet whose spire may be seen from New York, rising from above the brow of a hill on the opposite side of the Hudson, many of the old folks, even at the present day, speak English with an accent, and the dominie preaches in Dutch; and so completely is the hereditary love of quiet and silence maintained, that in one of these drowsy villages, in the middle of a warm summer's day, the buzzing of a stout blue-bottle fly will resound from one end of the place to the other.

With the laudable hereditary feeling thus kept up among these worthy people, did Mr. Knickerbocker undertake to write a history of his native city, comprising the reign of its three Dutch governors during the time that it was yet under the domination of the Hogenmogens of Holland. In the execution of this design the little Dutchman has displayed great historical research, and a wonderful consciousness of the dignity of his subject. His work, however, has been so little understood as to be pronounced a mere work of humor, satirizing the follies of the times, both in politics and morals, and giving whimsical views of human nature.

Be this as it may :—among the papers left behind him were several tales of a lighter nature,

apparently thrown together from materials gathered during his profound researches for his history, and which he seems to have cast by with neglect, as unworthy of publication. Some of these have fallen into my hands by an accident which it is needless at present to mention; and one of these very stories, with its prelude in the words of Mr. Knickerbocker, I undertook to read, by way of acquitting myself of the debt which I owed to the other story-tellers at the Hall. I subjoin it for such of my readers as are fond of stories.

THE HAUNTED HOUSE.

FROM THE MSS. OF THE LATE DIEDRICH KNICKERBOCKER.

Formerly almost every place had a house of this kind. If a house was seated on some melancholy place, or built in some old romantic manner, or if any particular accident had happened in it, such as murder, sudden death, or the like, to be sure that house had a mark set on it, and was afterwards esteemed the habitation of a ghost.—BOURNE'S ANTIQUITIES.

IN the neighborhood of the ancient city of the Manhattoes there stood, not very many years since, an old mansion, which, when I was a boy, went by the name of the Haunted House. It was one of the very few remains of the architecture of the early Dutch settlers, and must have been a house of some consequence at the time when it was built. It consisted of a centre and two wings, the gable ends of which were shaped like stairs. It was built partly of wood, and partly of small Dutch bricks, such as the worthy colonists brought with them from Hol-

land, before they discovered that bricks could be manufactured elsewhere. The house stood remote from the road, in the centre of a large field, with an avenue of old locust * trees leading up to it, several of which had been shivered by lightning, and two or three blown down. A few apple-trees grew straggling about the field; there were traces also of what had been a kitchen-garden; but the fences were broken down, the vegetables had disappeared, or had grown wild, and turned to little better than weeds, with here and there a ragged rose-bush or a tall sunflower shooting up from among the brambles, and hanging its head sorrowfully, as if contemplating the surrounding desolation. Part of the roof of the old house had fallen in, the windows were shattered, the panels of the doors broken, and mended with rough boards, and two rusty weathercocks at the ends of the house made a great jingling and whistling as they whirled about, but always pointed wrong. The appearance of the whole place was forlorn and desolate at the best of times; but, in unruly weather, the howling of the wind about the crazy old mansion, the screeching of the weathercocks, and the slamming and banging of a few loose window shutters, had altogether so wild and dreary an effect, that the neighbor-

* Acacias.

hood stood perfectly in awe of the place, and pronounced it the rendezvous of hobgoblins. I recollect the old building well; for many times, when an idle, unlucky urchin, I have prowled round its precinct, with some of my graceless companions, on holiday afternoons, when out on a freebooting cruise among the orchards. There was a tree standing near the house that bore the most beautiful and tempting fruit; but then it was on enchanted ground, for the place was so charmed by frightful stories that we dreaded to approach it. Sometimes we would venture in a body, and get near the Hesperian tree, keeping an eye upon the old mansion, and darting fearful glances into its shattered windows, when, just as we were about to seize upon our prize, an exclamation from some one of the gang, or an accidental noise, would throw us all into a panic, and we would scamper headlong from the place, nor stop until we had got quite into the road. Then there was sure to be a host of fearful anecdotes told of strange cries and groans, or of some hideous face suddenly seen staring out of one of the windows. By degrees we ceased to venture into these lonely grounds, but would stand at a distance, and throw stones at the building; and there was something fearfully pleasing in the sound as they rattled along the roof, or some-

times struck some jingling fragments of glass out of the windows.

The origin of this house was lost in the obsurity that covers the early period of the province, while under the government of their high mightinesses the states-general. Some reported it to have been a country residence of Wilhelmus Kieft, commonly called the Testy, one of the Dutch governors of New Amsterdam; others said it had been built by a naval commander who served under Van Tromp, and who, on being disappointed of preferment, retired from the service in disgust, became a philosopher through sheer spite, and brought over all his wealth to the province, that he might live according to his humor, and despise the world. The reason of its having fallen into decay was likewise a matter of dispute; some said it was in chancery, and had already cost more than its worth in legal expense; but the most current, and, of course, the most probable account, was that it was haunted, and that nobody could live quietly in it. There can, in fact, be very little doubt that this last was the case, there were so many corroborating stories to prove it,—not an old woman in the neighborhood but could furnish at least a score. A grayheaded curmudgeon of a negro who lived hard by had a whole budget of them to tell, many of which had hap-

pened to himself. I recollect many a time stopping with my schoolmates and getting him to relate some. The old crone lived in a hovel, in the midst of a small patch of potatoes and Indian corn, which his master had given him on setting him free. He would come to us, with his hoe in his hand, and as we sat perched, like a row of swallows, on the rail of a fence, in the mellow twilight of a summer evening, would tell us such fearful stories, accompanied by such awful rollings of his white eyes, that we were almost afraid of our own footsteps as we returned home afterwards in the dark.

Poor old Pompey! many years are passed since he died, and went to keep company with the ghosts he was so fond of talking about. He was buried in a corner of his own little potato patch; the plough soon passed over his grave, and levelled it with the rest of the field, and nobody thought any more of the grayheaded negro. By singular chance I was strolling in that neighborhood, several years afterwards, when I had grown up to be a young man, and I found a knot of gossips speculating on a skull which had just been turned up by a ploughshare. They, of course, determined it to be the remains of some one who had been murdered, and they had raked up with it some of the traditionary tales of the Haunted House. I knew it at once to be the relic

of poor Pompey, but I held my tongue; for I am too considerate of other people's enjoyment even to mar a story of a ghost or a murder. I took care, however, to see the bones of my old friend once more buried in a place where they were not likely to be disturbed. As I sat on the turf and watched the interment, I fell into a long conversation with an old gentleman of the neighborhood, John Josse Vandermoere, a pleasant gossiping man, whose whole life was spent in hearing and telling the news of the province. He recollected old Pompey, and his stories about the Haunted House; but he assured me he could give me one still more strange than any that Pompey had related; and on my expressing a great curiosity to hear it, he sat down beside me on the turf, and told the following tale. I have endeavored to give it as nearly as possible in his words; but it is now many years since, and I am grown old, and my memory is not over-good. I cannot therefore vouch for the language, but I am always scrupulous as to facts.

D. K.

DOLPH HEYLIGER.

"I take the town of concord, where I dwell,
All Kilborn be my witness, if I were not
Begot in bashfulness, brought up in shamefacedness.
Let 'un bring a dog but to my vace that can
Zay I have beat 'un, and without a fault;
Or but a cat will swear upon a book,
I have as much as zet a vire her tail,
And I 'll give him or her a crown for 'mends."

TALE OF A TUB.

IN the early time of the province of New York, while it groaned under the tyranny of the English governor, Lord Cornbury, who carried his cruelties towards the Dutch inhabitants so far as to allow no dominie, or schoolmaster, to officiate in their language without his special license; about this time there lived in the jolly little old city of the Manhattoes a kind motherly dame, known by the name of Dame Heyliger. She was the widow of a Dutch sea-captain, who died suddenly of a fever, in consequence of working too hard, and eating too heartily, at the time when all the inhabitants turned out in a panic, to fortify the place against the invasion of a small French privateer.* He left her with

* 1705.

very little money, and one infant son, the only survivor of several children. The good woman had need of much management to make both ends meet, and keep up a decent appearance. However, as her husband had fallen a victim to his zeal for the public safety, it was universally agreed that "something ought to be done for the widow"; and on the hopes of this "something" she lived tolerably for some years; in the meantime everybody pitied and spoke well of her, aud that helped along.

She lived in a small house, in a small street, called Garden Street, very probably from a garden which may have flourished there some time or other. As her necessities every year grew greater, and the talk of the public about doing "something for her" grew less, she had to cast about for some mode of doing something for herself, by way of helping out her slender means, and maintaining her independence, of which she was somewhat tenacious.

Living in a mercantile town, she had caught something of the spirit, and determined to venture a little in the great lottery of commerce. On a sudden, therefore, to the great surprise of the street, there appeared at her window a grand array of gingerbread kings and queens, with their arms stuck akimbo, after the invariable royal manner. There were also several broken

tumblers, some filled with sugar-plums, some with marbles; there were, moreover, cakes of various kinds, and barley-sugar, and Holland dolls, and wooden horses, with here and there gilt-covered picture-books, and now and then a skein of thread, or a dangling pound of candles. At the door of the house sat the good old dame's cat, a decent, demure-looking personage, who seemed to scan everybody that passed, to criticise their dress, and now and then to stretch her neck, and to look out with sudden curiosity, to see what was going on at the other end of the street; or if by chance any idle vagabond dog came by, and offered to be uncivil—hoity-toity! —how she would bristle up, and growl, and spit, and strike out her paws! she was as indignant as ever was an ancient and ugly spinster on the approach of some graceless profligate.

But though the good woman had to come down to those humble means of subsistence, yet she still kept up a feeling of family pride, being descended from the Vanderspiegels, of Amsterdam; and she had the family arms painted and framed, and hung over her mantelpiece. She was, in truth, much respected by all the poorer people of the place; her house was quite a resort of the old wives of the neighborhood, they would drop in there of a winter's afternoon, as she sat knitting on one side of her fireplace,

her cat purring on the other, and the tea-kettle singing before it; and they would gossip with her until late in the evening. There was always an arm-chair for Peter de Groodt, sometimes called Long Peter, and sometimes Peter Long-legs, the clerk and sexton of the little Lutheran church, who was her great crony, and indeed the oracle of her fireside. Nay, the dominie himself did not disdain, now and then, to step in, converse about the state of her mind, and take a glass of her special good cherry-brandy. Indeed, he never failed to call on New-Year's day, and wish her a happy New Year, and the good dame, who was a little vain on some points, always piqued herself on giving him as large a cake as any one in town.

I have said that she had one son. He was the child of her old age; but could hardly be called the comfort, for, of all unlucky urchins, Dolph Heyliger was the most mischievous. Not that the whipster was really vicious; he was only full of fun and frolic, and had that daring, gamesome spirit which is extolled in a rich man's child, but execrated in a poor man's. He was continually getting into scrapes; his mother was incessantly harassed with complaints of some waggish pranks which he had played off; bills were sent in for windows that he had broken; in a word, he had not reached his fourteenth

year before he was pronounced, by all the neighborhood, to be a "wicked dog, the wickedest dog in the street!" Nay, one old gentleman, in a claret-colored coat, with a thin red face, and ferret eyes, went so far as to assure Dame Heyliger, that her son would, one day or other, come to the gallows!

Yet, notwithstanding all this, the poor old soul loved her boy. It seemed as though she loved him the better the worse he behaved, and that he grew more in her favor the more he grew out of favor with the world. Mothers are foolish, fond-hearted beings; there 's no reasoning them out of their dotage; and, indeed, this poor woman's child was all that was left to love her in this world;—so we must not think it hard that she turned a deaf ear to her good friends, who sought to prove to her that Dolph would come to a halter.

To do the varlet justice, too, he was strongly attached to his parent. He would not willingly have given her pain on any account; and when he had been doing wrong, it was but for him to catch his poor mother's eye fixed wistfully and sorrowfully upon him, to fill his heart with bitterness and contrition. But he was a heedless youngster, and could not, for the life of him, resist any new temptation to fun and mischief. Though quick at his learning, whenever he

could be brought to apply himself, he was always prone to be led away by idle company, and would play truant to hunt after birds'-nests, to rob orchards, or to swim in the Hudson.

In this way he grew up, a tall, lubberly boy; and his mother began to be greatly perplexed what to do with him, or how to put him in a way to do for himself; for he had acquired such an unlucky reputation, that no one seemed willing to employ him.

Many were the consultations that she held with Peter de Groodt, the clerk and sexton, who was her prime counsellor. Peter was as much perplexed as herself, for he had no great opinion of the boy, and thought he would never come to good. He at once advised her to send him to sea: a piece of advice only given in the most desperate cases; but Dame Heyliger would not listen to such an idea; she could not think of letting Dolph go out of her sight. She was sitting one day knitting by her fireside, in great perplexity, when the sexton entered with an air of unusual vivacity and briskness. He had just come from a funeral. It had been that of a boy of Dolph's years, who had been apprentice to a famous German doctor, and had died of a consumption. It is true, there had been a whisper that the deceased had been brought to his end by being made the subject of the doctor's ex-

periments, on which he was apt to try the effects of a new compound, or a quieting draught. This, however, it is likely, was a mere scandal; at any rate, Peter de Groodt did not think it worth mentioning; though, had we time to philosophize, it would be a curious matter for speculation, why a doctor's family is apt to be so lean and cadaverous, and a butcher's so jolly and rubicund.

Peter de Groodt, as I said before, entered the house of Dame Heyliger with unusual alacrity. A bright idea had popped into his head at the funeral, over which he had chuckled as he shovelled the earth into the grave of the doctor's disciple. It had occurred to him, that, as the situation of the deceased was vacant at the doctor's, it would be the very place for Dolph. The boy had parts, and could pound a pestle, and run an errand with any boy in the town; and what more was wanted in a student?

The suggestion of the sage Peter was a vision of glory to the mother. She already saw Dolph, in her mind's eye, with a cane at his nose, a knocker at his door, and an M. D. at the end of his name,—one of the established dignitaries of the town.

The matter, once undertaken, was soon effected; the sexton had some influence with the doctor, they having had much dealing together

in the way of their separate professions; and the very next morning he called and conducted the urchin, clad in his Sunday clothes, to undergo the inspection of Dr. Karl Lodovick Knipperhausen.

They found the doctor seated in an elbow-chair, in one corner of his study, or laboratory, with a large volume, in German print, before him. He was a short, fat man, with a dark, square face, rendered more dark by a black velvet cap. He had a little nobbed nose, not unlike the ace of spades, with a pair of spectacles gleaming on each side of his dusky countenance, like a couple of bow-windows.

Dolph felt struck with awe on entering into the presence of this learned man; and gazed about him with boyish wonder at the furniture of this chamber of knowledge; which appeared to him almost as the den of a magician. In the centre stood a claw-footed table, with pestle and mortar, phials and gallipots, and a pair of small burnished scales. At one end was a heavy clothes-press, turned into a receptacle for drugs and compounds; against which hung the doctor's hat and cloak, and gold-headed cane, and on the top grinned a human skull. Along the mantelpiece were glass vessels, in which were snakes and lizards, and a human fœtus preserved in spirits. A closet, the doors

of which were taken off, contained three whole shelves of books, and some, too, of mighty folio dimensions,—a collection the like of which Dolph had never before beheld. As, however, the library did not take up the whole of the closet, the doctor's thrifty housekeeper had occupied the rest with pots of pickles and preserves; and had hung about the room, among awful implements of the healing art, strings of red pepper and corpulent cucumbers, carefully preserved for seed.

Peter de Groodt and his protégé were received with great gravity and stateliness by the doctor, who was a very wise, dignified little man, and never smiled. He surveyed Dolph from head to foot, above, and under, and through his spectacles, and the poor lad's heart quailed as these great glasses glared on him like two full moons. The doctor heard all that Peter de Groodt had to say in favor of the youthful candidate; and then wetting his thumb with the end of his tongue, he began deliberately to turn over page after page of the great black volume before him. At lengtL, after many hums and haws, and strokings of the chin, and all that hesitation and deliberation with which a wise man proceeds to do what he intended to do from the very first, the doctor agreed to take the lad as a disciple; to give him bed, board, and cloth-

ing, and to instruct him in the healing art; in return for which he was to have his services until his twenty-first year.

Behold, then, our hero, all at once transformed from an unlucky urchin running wild about the streets, to a student of medicine, diligently pounding a pestle, under the auspices of the learned Doctor Karl Lodovick Knipperhausen. It was a happy transition for his fond old mother. She was delighted with the idea of her boy's being brought up worthy of his ancestors; and anticipated the day when he would be able to hold up his head with the lawyer, that lived in the large house opposite; or, peradventure, with the dominie himself.

Doctor Knipperhausen was a native of the Palatinate in Germany; whence, in company with many of his countrymen, he had taken refuge in England, on account of religious persecution. He was one of nearly three thousand Palatines, who came over from England in 1710, under the protection of Governor Hunter. Where the doctor had studied, how he had acquired his medical knowledge, and where he had received his diploma, it is hard at present to say, for nobody knew at the time; yet it is certain that his profound skill and abstruse knowledge were the talk and wonder of the common people, far and near.

His practice was totally different from that of any other physician,—consisting in mysterious compounds, known only to himself, in the preparing and administering of which, it was said, he always consulted the stars. So high an opinion was entertained of his skill, particularly by the German and Dutch inhabitants, that they always resorted to him in desperate cases. He was one of those infallible doctors that are always effecting sudden and surprising cures, when the patient has been given up by all the regular physicians; unless, as is shrewdly observed, the case has been left too long before it was put into their hands. The doctor's library was the talk and marvel of the neighborhood, I might almost say the entire burgh. The good people looked with reverence at a man who had read three whole shelves full of books, and some of them, too, as large as a family Bible. There were many disputes among the members of the little Lutheran church, as to which was the wisest man, the doctor or the dominie. Some of his admirers even went so far as to say that he knew more than the governor himself,—in a word, it was thought that there was no end to his knowledge!

No sooner was Dolph received into the doctor's family, than he was put in possession of the lodging of his predecessor. It was a garret-

room of a steep-roofed Dutch house, where the rain had pattered on the shingles, and the lightning gleamed, and the wind piped through the crannies in stormy weather; and where whole troops of hungry rats, like Don Cossacks, galloped about, in defiance of traps and rats-bane.

He was soon up to his ears in medical studies, being employed, morning, noon, and night, in rolling pills, filtering tinctures, or pounding the pestle and mortar in one corner of the laboratory; while the doctor would take his seat in another corner, when he had nothing else to do, or expected visitors, and arrayed in his morning-gown and velvet cap, would pore over the contents of some folio volume. It is true, that the regular thumping of Dolph's pestle, or, perhaps, the drowsy buzzing of the summer-flies, would now and then lull the little man into a slumber; but then his spectacles were always wide-awake, and studiously regarding the book.

There was another personage in the house, however, to whom Dolph was obliged to pay allegiance. Though a bachelor, and a man of such great dignity and importance, the doctor was, like many other wise men, subject to petticoat government. He was completely under the sway of his housekeeper,—a spare, busy, fret-

ting housewife, in a little, round, quilted German cap, with a huge bunch of keys jingling at the girdle of an exceedingly long waist. Frau Ilsé (or Frow Ilsy, as it was pronounced) had accompanied him in his various migrations from Germany to England, and from England to the province; managing his establishment and himself too; ruling him, it is true, with a gentle hand, but carrying a high hand with all the world beside. How she had acquired such ascendancy I do not pretend to say. People, it is true, did talk—but have not people been prone to talk ever since the world began? Who can tell how women generally contrive to get the upperhand? A husband, it is true, may now and then be master in his own house; but who ever knew a bachelor that was not managed by his housekeeper?

Indeed, Frau Ilsy's power was not confined to the doctor's household. She was one of those prying gossips who know every one's business better than they do themselves, and whose all-seeing eyes and all-telling tongues are terrors throughout a neighborhood.

Nothing of any moment transpired in the world of scandal of this little burgh but it was known to Frau Ilsy. She had her crew of cronies, that were perpetually hurrying to her little parlor with some precious bit of news;

nay, she would sometimes discuss a whole volume of secret history, as she held the street-door ajar, and gossiped with one of these garrulous cronies in the very teeth of a December blast.

Between the doctor and the housekeeper it may easily be supposed that Dolph had a busy life of it. As Frau Ilsy kept the keys, and literally ruled the roast, it was starvation to offend her, though he found the study of her temper more perplexing even than that of medicine. When not busy in the laboratory, she kept him running hither and thither on her errands ; and on Sundays he was obliged to accompany her to and from church, and carry her Bible. Many a time has the poor varlet stood shivering and blowing his fingers, or holding his frost-bitten nose, in the churchyard, while Ilsy and her cronies were huddled together, wagging their heads, and tearing some unlucky character to pieces.

With all his advantages, however, Dolph made very slow progress in his art. This was no fault of the doctor's certainly, for he took unwearied pains with the lad, keeping him close to the pestle and mortar, or on the trot about town with phials and pill-boxes ; and if he ever flagged in his industry, which he was rather apt to do, the doctor would fly into a

passion, and ask him if he ever expected to learn his profession, unless he applied himself closer to the study. The fact is, he still retained the fondness for sport and mischief that had marked his childhood; the habit, indeed, had strengthened with his years, and gained force from being thwarted and constrained. He daily grew more and more untractable, and lost favor in the eyes both of the doctor and the housekeeper.

In the meantime the doctor went on, waxing wealthy and renowned. He was famous for his skill in managing cases not laid down in the books. He had cured several old women and young girls of witchcraft,—a terrible complaint, and nearly as prevalent in the province in those days as hydrophobia is at present. He had even restored one strapping country-girl to perfect health, who had gone so far as to vomit crooked pins and needles, which is considered a desperate stage of the malady. It was whispered also that he was possessed of the art of preparing love-powders; and many applications had he in consequence from love-sick patients of both sexes. But all these cases formed the mysterious part of his practice, in which, according to the cant phrase, "secrecy and honor might be depended on." Dolph, therefore, was obliged to turn out of the study

whenever such consultations occurred, though it is said he learnt more of the secrets of the art at the key-hole than by all the rest of his studies put together.

As the doctor increased in wealth, he began to extend his possessions, and to look forward, like other great men, to the time when he should retire to the repose of a country-seat. For this purpose he had purchased a farm, or, as the Dutch settlers called it a *bowerie*, a few miles from town. It had been the residence of a wealthy family that had returned some time since to Holland. A large mansion-house stood in the centre of it, very much out of repair, and which, in consequence of certain reports, had received the appellation of the Haunted House. Either from these reports, or from its actual dreariness, the doctor found it impossible to get a tenant; and that the place might not fall to ruin before he could reside in it himself, he placed a country boor, with his family, in one wing, with the privilege of cultivating the farm on shares.

The doctor now felt all the dignity of a landholder rising within him. He had a little of the German pride of territory in his composition, and almost looked upon himself as owner of a principality. He began to complain of the fatigue of business, and was fond of riding out

"to look at his estate." His little expeditions to his lands were attended with a bustle and parade that created a sensation throughout the neighborhood. His wall-eyed horse stood, stamping and whisking off the flies, for a full hour before the house. Then the doctor's saddle-bags would be brought out and adjusted; then, after a little while, his cloak would be rolled up and strapped to the saddle; then his umbrella would be buckled to the cloak; while, in the meantime, a group of ragged boys, that observant class of beings, would gather before the door. At length the doctor would issue forth, in a pair of jack-boots that reached above his knees, and a cocked hat flapped down in front. As he was a short, fat man, he took some time to mount into the saddle; and when there, he took some time to have the saddle and stirrups properly adjusted, enjoying the wonder and admiration of the urchin crowd. Even after he had set off, he would pause in the middle of the street, or trot back two or three times to give some parting orders, which were answered by the housekeeper from the door, or Dolph from the study, or the black cook from the cellar, or the chambermaid from the garret-window; and there were generally some last words bawled after him, just as he was turning the corner.

The whole neighborhood would be aroused by this pomp and circumstance. The cobbler would leave his last; the barber would thrust out his frizzled head, with a comb sticking in it; a knot would collect at the grocer's door, and the word would be buzzed from one end of the street to the other: "The doctor 's riding out to his country-seat!"

These were golden moments for Dolph. No sooner was the doctor out of sight than pestle and mortar were abandoned; the laboratory was left to take care of itself, and the student was off on some madcap frolic.

Indeed, it must be confessed, the youngster, as he grew up, seemed in a fair way to fulfil the prediction of the old claret-colored gentleman. He was the ringleader of all holiday sports and midnight gambols; ready for all kinds of mischievous pranks and hair-brained adventures.

There is nothing so troublesome as a hero on a small scale, or, rather, a hero in a small town. Dolph soon became the abhorrence of all drowsy, housekeeping old citizens, who hated noise, and had no relish for waggery. The good dames, too, considered him as little better than a reprobate, gathered their daughters under their wings whenever he approached, and pointed him out as a warning to their sons.

No one seemed to hold him in much regard except the wild striplings of the place, who were captivated by his open-hearted, daring manners, and the negroes, who always look upon every idle, do-nothing youngster as a kind of gentleman. Even the good Peter de Groodt, who had considered himself a kind of patron of the lad, began to despair of him; and would shake his head dubiously, as he listened to a long complaint from the housekeeper, and sipped a glass of her raspberry brandy.

Still his mother was not to be wearied out of her affection by all the waywardness of her boy, nor disheartened by the stories of his misdeeds, with which her good friends were continually regaling her. She had, it is true, very little of the pleasure which rich people enjoy, in always hearing their children praised; but she considered all this ill-will as a kind of persecution which he suffered, and she liked him the better on that account. She saw him growing up a fine, tall, good-looking youngster, and she looked at him with the secret pride of a mother's heart. It was her great desire that Dolph should appear like a gentleman, and all the money she could save went towards helping out his pocket and his wardrobe. She would look out of the window after him, as he sallied forth in his best array, and her heart

would yearn with delight; and once, when Peter de Groodt, struck with the youngster's gallant appearance on a bright Sunday morning, observed: "Well, after all, Dolph does grow a comely fellow!" the tear of pride started into the mother's eye. "Ah, neighbor! neighbor!" exclaimed she, "they may say what they please; poor Dolph will yet hold up his head with the best of them!"

Dolph Heyliger had now nearly attained his one-and-twentieth year, and the term of his medical studies was just expiring, yet it must be confessed that he knew little more of the profession than when he first entered the doctor's doors. This, however, could not be from any want of quickness of parts, for he showed amazing aptness in mastering other branches of knowledge, which he could only have studied at intervals. He was, for instance, a sure marksman, and won all the geese and turkeys at Christmas holidays. He was a bold rider; he was famous for leaping and wrestling; he played tolerably on the fiddle; could swim like a fish; and was the best hand in the whole place at fives or ninepins.

All these accomplishments, however, procured him no favor in the eyes of the doctor, who grew more and more crabbed and intolerant the nearer the term of apprenticeship ap-

proached. Frau Ilsy, too, was forever finding some occasion to raise a windy tempest about his ears, and seldom encountered him about the house without a clatter of the tongue; so that at length the jingling of her keys, as she approached, was to Dolph like the ringing of the prompter's bell, that gives notice of a theatrical thunder-storm. Nothing but the infinite good-humor of the heedless youngster enabled him to bear all this domestic tyranny without open rebellion. It was evident that the doctor and his housekeeper were preparing to beat the poor youth out of the nest, the moment his term should have expired,—a short-hand mode which the doctor had of providing for useless disciples.

Indeed the little man had been rendered more than usually irritable lately in consequence of various cares and vexations which his country estate had brought upon him. The doctor had been repeatedly annoyed by the rumors and tales which prevailed concerning the old mansion, and found it difficult to prevail even upon the countryman and his family to remain there rent-free. Every time he rode out to the farm he was teased by some fresh complaint of strange noises and fearful sights, with which the tenants were disturbed at night; and the doctor would come home fretting and fuming,

and vent his spleen upon the whole household. It was indeed a sore grievance that affected him both in pride and purse. He was threatened with an absolute loss of the profits of his property; and then, what a blow to his territorial consequence, to be the landlord of a haunted house!

It was observed, however, that with all his vexation, the doctor never proposed to sleep in the house himself; nay, he could never be prevailed upon to remain on the premises after dark, but made the best of his way for town as soon as the bats began to flit about in the twilight. The fact was, the doctor had a secret belief in ghosts, having passed the early part of his life in a country where they particularly abound; and indeed the story went that, when a boy, he had once seen the Devil upon the Hartz Mountains in Germany.

At length the doctor's vexations on this head were brought to a crisis. One morning as he sat dozing over a volume in his study, he was suddenly startled from his slumbers by the bustling in of the housekeeper.

"Here 's a fine to do!" cried she, as she entered the room. "Here 's Claus Hopper come in, bag and baggage, from the farm, and swears he 'll have nothing more to do with it. The whole family have been frightened out of their

wits; and there 's such racketing and rummaging about the old house, that they can't sleep quiet in their beds!"

"Donner and blitzen!" cried the doctor, impatiently; "will they never have done chattering about that house? What a pack of fools, to let a few rats and mice frighten them out of good quarters!"

"Nay, nay," cried the housekeeper, wagging her head knowingly, and piqued at having a good ghost-story doubted, "there 's more in it than rats and mice. All the neighborhood talks about the house; and then such sights as have been seen in it! Peter de Groodt tells me that the family that sold you the house, and went to Holland, dropped several strange hints about it, and said 'they wished you joy of your bargain'; and you know yourself there 's no getting any family to live in it."

"Peter de Groodt 's a ninny—an old woman," said the doctor, peevishly; "I 'll warrant he 's been filling these people's heads full of stories. It 's just like his nonsense about the ghost that haunted the church-belfry, as an excuse for not ringing the bell that cold night when Harmanus Brinkerhoff's house was on fire. Send Claus to me."

Claus Hopper now made his appearance: a simple country lout, full of awe at finding him-

self in the very study of Dr. Knipperhausen, and too much embarrassed to enter in much detail of the matters that had caused his alarm. He stood twirling his hat in one hand, resting sometimes on one leg, sometimes on the other, looking occasionally at the doctor, and now and then stealing a fearful glance at the death's head that seemed ogling him from the top of the clothes-press.

The doctor tried every means to persuade him to return to the farm, but all in vain; he maintained a dogged determination on the subject; and at the close of every argument or solicitation would make the same brief, inflexible reply, "Ich kan nicht, mynheer." The doctor was a "little pot, and soon hot"; his patience was exhausted by these continual vexations about his estate. The stubborn refusal of Claus Hopper seemed to him like flat rebellion; his temper suddenly boiled over, and Claus was glad to make a rapid retreat to escape scalding.

When the bumpkin got to the housekeeper's room, he found Peter de Groodt, and several other true believers ready to receive him. Here he indemnified himself for the restraint he had suffered in the study, and opened a budget of stories about the haunted house that astonished all his hearers. The housekeeper believed them

all, if it was only to spite the doctor for having received her intelligence so uncourteously. Peter de Groodt matched them with many a wonderful legend of the times of the Dutch dynasty, and of the Devil's Stepping-stones; and of the pirate hanged at Gibbet Island, that continued to swing there at night long after the gallows was taken down; and of the ghost of the unfortunate Governor Leisler, hanged for treason, which haunted the old fort and the government-house. The gossiping knot dispersed, each charged with direful intelligence. The sexton disburdened himself at a vestry meeting that was held that very day, and the black cook forsook her kitchen, and spent half the day at the street-pump, that gossiping-place of servants, dealing forth the news to all that came for water. In a little time the whole town was in a buzz with tales about the haunted house. Some said that Claus Hopper had seen the Devil, while others hinted that the house was haunted by the ghosts of some of the patients whom the doctor had physicked out of the world, and that was the reason why he did not venture to live in it himself.

All this put the little doctor in a terrible fume. He threatened vengeance on any one who should affect the value of his property by exciting popular prejudices. He complained

loudly of thus being in a manner dispossessed of his territories by mere bugbears; but he secretly determined to have the house exorcised by the dominie. Great was his relief, therefore, when, in the midst of his perplexities, Dolph stepped forward and undertook to garrison the haunted house. The youngster had been listening to all the stories of Claus Hopper and Peter de Groodt: he was fond of adventure, he loved the marvellous, and his imagination had become quite excited by these tales of wonder. Besides, he had led such an uncomfortable life at the doctor's, being subjected to the intolerable thraldom of early hours, that he was delighted at the prospect of having a house to himself, even though it should be a haunted one. His offer was eagerly accepted, and it was determined he should mount guard that very night. His only stipulation was, that the enterprise should be kept secret from his mother; for he knew the poor soul would not sleep a wink if she knew her son was waging war with the powers of darkness.

When night came on he set out on this perilous expedition. The old black cook, his only friend in the household, had provided him with a little mess for his supper, and a rush-light; and she tied round his neck an amulet, given her by an African conjurer, as a charm against evil

spirits. Dolph was escorted on his way by the doctor and Peter de Groodt, who had agreed to accompany him to the house, and to see him safe lodged. The night was overcast, and it was very dark when they arrived at the grounds which surrounded the mansion. The sexton led the way with a lantern. As they walked along the avenue of acacias, the fitful light, catching from bush to bush, and tree to tree, often startled the doughty Peter, and made him fall back upon his followers; and the doctor grappled still closer hold of Dolph's arm, observing that the ground was very slippery and uneven. At one time they were nearly put to total rout by a bat, which came flitting about the lantern; and the notes of the insects from the trees, and the frogs from a neighboring pond, formed a most drowsy and doleful concert. The front door of the mansion opened with a grating sound, that made the doctor turn pale. They entered a tolerably large hall, such as is common in American country-houses, and which serves for a sitting-room in warm weather. From this they went up a wide staircase, that groaned and creaked as they trod, every step making its particular note, like the key of a harpsichord. This led to another hall on the second story, whence they entered the room where Dolph was to sleep. It was large,

and scantily furnished; the shutters were closed; but as they were much broken, there was no want of a circulation of air. It appeared to have been that sacred chamber, known among Dutch housewives by the name of "the best bedroom"; which is the best-furnished room in the house, but in which scare anybody is ever permitted to sleep. Its splendor, however, was all at an end. There were a few broken articles of furniture about the room, and in the centre stood a heavy deal table and a large arm-chair, both of which had the look of being coeval with the mansion. The fireplace was wide, and had been faced with Dutch tiles, representing Scripture stories; but some of them had fallen out of their places, and lay scattered about the hearth. The sexton lit the rush-light; and the doctor, looking fearfully about the room, was just exhorting Dolph to be of good cheer, and to pluck up a stout heart, when a noise in the chimney, like voices and struggling, struck a sudden panic into the sexton. He took to his heels with the lantern; the doctor followed hard after him; the stairs groaned and creaked as they hurried down, increasing their agitation and speed by its noises. The front door slammed after them; and Dolph heard them scrabbling down the avenue, till the sound of their feet was lost

in the distance. That he did not join in this precipitate retreat might have been owing to his possessing a little more courage than his companions, or perhaps that he had caught a glimpse of the cause of their dismay, in a nest of chimney-swallows, that came tumbling down into the fireplace.

Being now left to himself, he secured the front door by a strong bolt and bar; and having seen that the other entrances were fastened, returned to his desolate chamber. Having made his supper from the basket which the good old cook had provided, he locked the chamber-door, and retired to rest on a mattress in one corner. The night was calm and still; and nothing broke upon the profound quiet but the lonely chirping of a cricket from the chimney of a distant chamber. The rush-light, which stood in the centre of the deal table, shed a feeble yellow ray, dimly illumining the chamber, and making uncouth shapes and shadows on the walls, from the clothes which Dolph had thrown over a chair.

With all his boldness of heart, there was something subduing in this desolate scene; and he felt his spirits flag within him, as he lay on his hard bed and gazed about the room. He was turning over in his mind his idle habits, his doubtful prospects, and now and then

heaving a heavy sigh as he thought on his poor old mother; for there is nothing like the silence and loneliness of night to bring dark shadows over the brightest mind. By-and-by he thought he heard a sound as of some one walking below stairs. He listened, and distinctly heard a step on the great staircase. It approached solemnly and slowly, tramp — tramp — tramp! It was evidently the tread of some heavy personage; and yet how could he have got into the house without making a noise? He had examined all the fastenings, and was certain that every entrance was secure. Still the steps advanced, tramp — tramp — tramp! It was evident that the person approaching could not be a robber, the step was too loud and deliberate; a robber would either be stealthy or precipitate. And now the footsteps had ascended the staircase; they were slowly advancing along the passage, resounding through the silent and empty apartments. The very cricket had ceased its melancholy note, and nothing interrupted their awful distinctness. The door, which had been locked on the inside, slowly swung open, as if self-moved. The footsteps entered the room; but no one was to be seen. They passed slowly and audibly across it, tramp—tramp—tramp! but whatever made the sound was invisible. Dolph rubbed his eyes, and stared about him;

he could see to every part of the dimly-lighted chamber; all was vacant; yet still he heard those mysterious footsteps, solemnly walking about the chamber. They ceased, and all was dead silence. There was something more appalling in this invisible visitation than there would have been in any thing that addressed itself to the eyesight. It was awfully vague and indefinite. He felt his heart beat against his ribs; a cold sweat broke out upon his forehead; he lay for some time in a state of violent agitation; nothing, however, occurred to increase his alarm. His light gradually burnt down into the socket, and he fell asleep. When he awoke it was broad daylight; the sun was peering through the cracks of the window-shutters, and the birds were merrily singing about the house. The bright cheery day soon put to flight all the terrors of the preceding night. Dolph laughed, or rather tried to laugh, at all that had passed, and endeavored to persuade himself that it was a mere freak of the imagination, conjured up by the stories he had heard; but he was a little puzzled to find the door of his room locked on the inside, notwithstanding that he had positively seen it swing open as the footsteps had entered. He returned to town in a state of considerable perplexity; but he determined to

say nothing on the subject, until his doubts were either confirmed or removed by another night's watching. His silence was a grievous disappointment to the gossips who had gathered at the doctor's mansion. They had prepared their minds to hear direful tales, and were almost in a rage at being assured he had nothing to relate.

The next night, then, Dolph repeated his vigil. He now entered the house with some trepidation. He was particular in examining the fastenings of all the doors, and securing them well. He locked the door of his chamber, and placed a chair against it; then having dispatched his supper, he threw himself on his mattress and endeavored to sleep. It was all in vain; a thousand crowding fancies kept him waking. The time slowly dragged on, as if minutes were spinning themselves out into hours. As the night advanced, he grew more and more nervous; and he almost started from his couch when he heard the mysterious footstep again on the staircase. Up it came, as before, solemnly and slowly, tramp—tramp—tramp! It approached along the passage; the door again swung open, as if there had been neither lock nor impediment, and a strange-looking figure stalked into the room. It was an elderly man, large and robust, clothed in

the old Flemish fashion. He had on a kind of short cloak, with a garment under it, belted round the waist; trunk-hose, with great bunches or bows at the knees; and a pair of russet boots, very large at top, and standing widely from his legs. His hat was broad and slouched, with a feather trailing over one side. His iron-gray hair hung in thick masses on his neck; and he had a short grizzled beard. He walked slowly round the room, as if examining that all was safe; then, hanging his hat on a peg beside the door, he sat down in the elbow-chair, and, leaning his elbow on the table, fixed his eyes on Dolph with an unmoving and deadening stare.

Dolph was not naturally a coward; but he had been brought up in an implicit belief in ghosts and goblins. A thousand stories came swarming to his mind that he had heard about this building; and as he looked at this strange personage, with his uncouth garb, his pale visage, his grizzly beard, and his fixed, staring, fish-like eye, his teeth began to chatter, his hair to rise on his head, and a cold sweat to break out all over his body. How long he remained in this situation he could not tell, for he was like one fascinated. He could not take his gaze off from the spectre; but lay staring at him, with his whole intellect absorbed in the

contemplation. The old man remained seated behind the table, without stirring, or turning an eye, always keeping a dead steady glare upon Dolph. At length the household cock, from a neighboring farm, clapped his wings, and gave a loud cheerful crow that rung over the fields. At the sound the old man slowly rose, and took down his hat from the peg; the door opened, and closed after him; he was heard to go slowly down the staircase, tramp — tramp — tramp!—and when he had got to the bottom, all was again silent. Dolph lay and listened earnestly; counted every footfall; listened, and listened, if the steps should return, until, exhausted by watching and agitation, he fell into a troubled sleep.

Daylight again brought fresh courage and assurance. He would fain have considered all that had passed as a mere dream; yet there stood the chair in which the unknown had seated himself; there was the table on which he had leaned; there was the peg on which he had hung his hat; and there was the door, locked precisely as he himself had locked it, with the chair placed against it. He hastened down-stairs, and examined the doors and windows; all were exactly in the same state in which he had left them, and there was no apparent way by which any being could have

entered and left the house without leaving some trace behind. "Pooh!" said Dolph to himself, "it was all a dream:"—but it would not do; the more he endeavored to shake the scene off from his mind, the more it haunted him.

Though he persisted in a strict silence as to all that he had seen or heard, yet his looks betrayed the uncomfortable night that he had passed. It was evident that there was something wonderful hidden under this mysterious reserve. The doctor took him into the study, locked the door, and sought to have a full and confidential communication; but he could get nothing out of him. Frau Ilsy took him aside into the pantry, but to as little purpose; and Peter de Groodt held him by the button for a full hour, in the churchyard, the very place to get at the bottom of a ghost story, but came off not a whit wiser than the rest. It is always the case, however, that one truth concealed makes a dozen current lies. It is like a guinea locked up in a bank, that has a dozen paper representatives. Before the day was over, the neighborhood was full of reports. Some said that Dolph Heyliger watched in the haunted house, with pistols loaded with silver bullets; others, that he had a long talk with a spectre without a head; others, that Doctor Knipperhausen and the sexton had been hunted down the Bowery

lane, and quite into town, by a legion of ghosts of their customers. Some shook their heads, and thought it a shame the doctor should put Dolph to pass the night alone in that dismal house, where he might be spirited away, no one knew whither; while others observed, with a shrug, that if the Devil did carry off the youngster, it would be but taking his own.

These rumors at length reached the ears of the good Dame Heyliger, and, as may be supposed, threw her into a terrible alarm. For her son to have opposed himself to danger from living foes, would have been nothing so dreadful in her eyes, as to dare alone the terrors of the haunted house. She hastened to the doctor's, and passed a great part of the day in attempting to dissuade Dolph from repeating his vigil; she told him a score of tales, which her gossiping friends had just related to her, of persons who had been carried off, when watching alone in old ruinous houses. It was all to no effect. Dolph's pride, as well as curiosity, was piqued. He endeavored to calm the apprehensions of his mother, and to assure her that there was no truth in all the rumors she had heard; she looked at him dubiously and shook her head; but finding his determination was not to be shaken, she brought him a little thick Dutch Bible, with brass clasps, to take with him, as a

sword wherewith to fight the powers of darkness; and, lest that might not be sufficient, the housekeeper gave him the Heidelberg catechism by way of dagger.

The next night, therefore, Dolph took up his quarters for the third time in the old mansion. Whether dream or not, the same thing was repeated. Towards midnight, when every thing was still, the same sound echoed through the empty halls, tramp—tramp—tramp! The stairs were again ascended; the door again swung open; the old man entered; walked round the room; hung up his hat, and seated himself by the table. The same fear and trembling came over poor Dolph, though not in so violent a degree. He lay in the same way, motionless and fascinated, staring at the figure, which regarded him as before with a dead, fixed, chilling gaze. In this way they remained for a long time, till, by degrees, Dolph's courage began gradually to revive. Whether alive or dead, this being had certainly some object in his visitation, and he recollected to have heard it said, spirits have no power to speak until spoken to. Summoning up resolution, therefore, and making two or three attempts, before he could get his parched tongue in motion, he addressed the unknown in the most solemn form of adjuration, and demanded to know what was the motive of his visit.

No sooner had he finished than the old man rose, took down his hat, the door opened, and he went out, looking back upon Dolph just as he crossed the threshold, as if expecting him to follow. The youngster did not hesitate an instant. He took the candle in his hand, and the Bible under his arm, and obeyed the tacit invitation. The candle emitted a feeble, uncertain ray; but still he could see the figure before him slowly descend the stairs. He followed trembling. When it had reached the bottom of the stairs it turned through the hall towards the back-door of the mansion. Dolph held the light over the balustrades; but in his eagerness to catch a sight of the unknown he flared his feeble taper so suddenly that it went out. Still there was sufficient light from the pale moonbeams that fell through a narrow window to give him an indistinct view of the figure near the door. He followed, therefore, down-stairs, and turned towards the place; but when he arrived there the unknown had disappeared. The door remained fast barred and bolted; there was no other mode of exit; yet the being, whatever he might be, was gone. He unfastened the door, and looked out into the fields. It was a hazy, moonlight night, so that the eye could distinguish objects at some distance. He thought he saw the unknown in a footpath

which led from the door. He was not mistaken; but how had he got out of the house? He did not pause to think, but followed on. The old man proceeded at a measured pace, without looking about him, his footsteps sounding on the hard ground. He passed through the orchard of apple-trees, always keeping the foot-path. It led to a well, situated in a little hollow, which had supplied the farm with water. Just at this well Dolph lost sight of him. He rubbed his eyes and looked again; but nothing was to be seen of the unknown. He reached the well, but nobody was there. All the surrounding ground was open and clear; there was no bush nor hiding-place. He looked down the well, and saw, at a great depth, the reflection of the sky in the still water. After remaining here for some time, without seeing or hearing any thing more of his mysterious conductor, he returned to the house, full of awe and wonder. He bolted the door, groped his way back to bed, and it was long before he could compose himself to sleep.

His dreams were strange and troubled. He thought he was following the old man along the side of a great river, until they came to a vessel on the point of sailing, and that his conductor led him on board and vanished. He remembered the commander of the vessel, a

short swarthy man, with crisped black hair, blind of one eye, and lame of one leg; but the rest of his dream was very confused. Sometimes he was sailing; sometimes on shore; now amidst storms and tempests, and now wandering quietly in unknown streets. The figure of the old man was strangely mingled up with the incidents of the dream, and the whole distinctly wound up by his finding himself on board of the vessel again, returning home, with a great bag of money!

When he woke, the gray, cool light of dawn was streaking the horizon, and the cocks passing the reveille from farm to farm throughout the country. He rose more harassed and perplexed than ever. He was singularly confounded by all that he had seen and dreamt, and began to doubt whether his mind was not affected, and whether all that was passing in his thoughts might not be mere feverish fantasy. In his present state of mind he did not feel disposed to return immediately to the doctor's, and undergo the cross-questioning of the household. He made a scanty breakfast, therefore, on the remains of the last night's provisions, and then wandered out into the fields to meditate on all that had befallen him. Lost in thought he rambled about, gradually approaching the town, until the morning was far

advanced, when he was roused by a hurry and bustle around him. He found himself near the water's edge, in a throng of people, hurrying to a pier, where was a vessel ready to make sail. He was unconsciously carried along by the impulse of the crowd, and found that it was a sloop on the point of sailing up the Hudson to Albany. There was much leave-taking, and kissing of old women and children, and great activity in carrying on board baskets of bread and cakes, and provisions of all kinds, notwithstanding the mighty joints of meat that dangled over the stern; for a voyage to Albany was an expedition of great moment in those days. The commander of the sloop was hurrying about, and giving a world of orders, which were not very strictly attended to, one man being busy in lighting his pipe, and another in sharpening his snicker-snee.

The appearance of the commander suddenly caught Dolph's attention. He was short and swarthy, with crisped black hair; blind of one eye and lame of one leg—the very commander that he had seen in his dream! Surprised and aroused, he considered the scene more attentively, and recalled still further traces of his dream: the appearance of the vessel, of the river, and of a variety of other objects accorded with the imperfect images vaguely rising to recollection.

As he stood musing on these circumstances, the captain suddenly called out to him in Dutch, "Step on board, young man, or you 'll be left behind!" He was startled by the summons; he saw that the sloop was cast loose, and was actually moving from the pier; it seemed as if he was actuated by some irresistible impulse; he sprang upon the deck, and the next moment the sloop was hurried off by the wind and tide. Dolph's thoughts and feelings were all in tumult and confusion. He had been strongly worked upon by the events which had recently befallen him, and could not but think there was some connection between his present situation and his last night's dream. He felt as if under supernatural influence; and tried to assure himself with an old and favorite maxim of his, that "one way or other all would turn out for the best." For a moment, the indignation of the doctor at his departure, without leave, passed across his mind, but that was matter of little moment; then he thought of the distress of his mother at his strange disappearance, and the idea gave him a sudden pang; he would have entreated to be put on shore; but he knew with such wind and tide the entreaty would have been in vain. Then the inspiring love of novelty and adventure came rushing in full tide through his bosom; he felt himself

launched strangely and suddenly on the world, and under full way to explore the regions of wonder that lay up this mighty river, and beyond those blue mountains which had bounded his horizon since childhood. While he was lost in this whirl of thought, the sails strained to the breeze; the shores seemed to hurry away behind him; and before he perfectly recovered his self-possession, the sloop was ploughing her way past Spiking-devil and Yonkers, and the tallest chimney of the Manhattoes had faded from his sight.

I have said that a voyage up the Hudson in those days was an undertaking of some moment; indeed, it was as much thought of as a voyage to Europe is at present. The sloops were often many days on the way; the cautious navigators taking in sail when it blew fresh, and coming to anchor at night; and stopping to send the boat ashore for milk or tea; without which it was impossible for the worthy old lady passengers to subsist. And there were the much-talked-of perils of the Tappaan Zee, and the highlands. In short, a prudent Dutch burgher would talk of such a voyage for months, and even years, beforehand; and never undertook it without putting his affairs in order, making his will, and having prayers said for him in the Low Dutch churches.

In the course of such a voyage, therefore, Dolph was satisfied he would have time enough to reflect, and to make up his mind as to what he should do when he arrived at Albany. The captain, with his blind eye and lame leg, would, it is true, bring his strange dream to mind, and perplex him sadly for a few moments; but of late his life had been made up so much of dreams and realities, his nights and days had been so jumbled together, that he seemed to be moving continually in a delusion. There is always, however, a kind of vagabond consolation in a man's having nothing in this world to lose; with this Dolph comforted his heart, and determined to make the most of the present enjoyment.

In the second day of the voyage they came to the highlands. It was the latter part of a calm, sultry day, that they floated gently with the tide between these stern mountains. There was that perfect quiet which prevails over nature in the languor of summer heat; the turning of a plank, or the accidental falling of an oar on deck, was echoed from the mountain side, and reverberated along the shores; and if by chance the captain gave a shout of command, there were airy tongues which mocked it from every cliff.

Dolph gazed about him in mute delight and

wonder at these scenes of nature's magnificence. To the left the Dunderberg reared its woody precipices, height over height, forest over forest, away into the deep summer sky. To the right strutted forth the bold promontory of Antony's Nose, with a solitary eagle wheeling about it; while beyond, mountain succeeded to mountain, until they seemed to lock their arms together, and confine this mighty river in their embraces. There was a feeling of quiet luxury in gazing at the broad, green bosoms here and there scooped out among the precipices; or at woodlands high in air, nodding over the edge of some beetling bluff, and their foliage all transparent in the yellow sunshine.

In the midst of his admiration, Dolph remarked a pile of bright, snowy clouds, peering above the western heights. It was succeeded by another, and another, each seemingly pushing onwards its predecessor, and towering with dazzling brilliancy in the deep-blue atmosphere; and now muttering peals of thunder were faintly heard rolling behind the mountains. The river, hitherto still and glassy, reflecting pictures of the sky and land, now showed a dark ripple at a distance, as the breeze came creeping up it. The fish-hawks wheeled and screamed, and sought their nests on the high dry trees; the crows flew clamorously to the crevices of

the rocks, and all nature seemed conscious of the approaching thunder-gust.

The clouds now rolled in volumes over the mountain tops; their summits still bright and snowy, but the lower parts of an inky blackness. The rain began to patter down in broad and scattered drops; the wind freshened, and curled up the waves; at length it seemed as if the bellying clouds were torn open by the mountain tops, and complete torrents of rain came rattling down. The lightning leaped from cloud to cloud, and streamed quivering against the rocks, splitting and rending the stoutest forest-trees. The thunder burst in tremendous explosions; the peals were echoed from mountain to mountain; they crashed upon Dunderberg, and rolled up the long defile of the highlands, each headland making a new echo, until old Bull Hill seemed to bellow back the storm.

For a time the scudding rack and mist, and the sheeted rain, almost hid the landscape from the sight. There was a fearful gloom, illumined still more fearfully by the streams of lightning which glittered among the rain-drops. Never had Dolph beheld such an absolute warring of the elements; it seemed as if the storm was tearing and rending its way through this mountain defile, and had brought all the artillery of heaven into action.

The vessel was hurried on by the increasing wind, until she came to where the river makes a sudden bend, the only one in the whole course of its majestic career.* Just as they turned the point, a violent flaw of wind came sweeping down a mountain gully, bending the forest before it, and, in a moment, lashing up the river into white froth and foam. The captain saw the danger, and cried out to lower the sail. Before the order could be obeyed, the flaw struck the sloop, and threw her on her beam ends. Every thing now was fright and confusion : the flapping of the sails, the whistling and rushing of the wind, the bawling of the captain and crew, the shrieking of the passengers, all mingling with the rolling and bellowing of the thunder. In the midst of the uproar the sloop righted ; at the same time the mainsail shifted, the boom came sweeping the quarter-deck, and Dolf, who was gazing unguardedly at the clouds, found himself in a moment floundering in the river.

For once in his life one of his idle accomplishments was of use to him. The many truant hours he had devoted to sporting in the Hudson had made him an expert swimmer; yet with all his strength and skill he found great difficulty in reaching the shore. His disappear-

* This must have been the bend at West Point.

ance from the deck had not been noticed by the crew, who were all occupied with their own danger. The sloop was driven along with inconceivable rapidity. She had hard work to weather a long promontory on the eastern shore, round which the river turned, and which completely shut her from Dolph's view.

It was on a point of the western shore that he landed, and, scrambling up the rocks, threw himself, faint and exhausted, at the foot of a tree. By degrees the thunder-gust passed over. The clouds rolled away to the east, where they lay piled in feathery masses, tinted with the last rosy rays of the sun. The distant play of the lightning might be seen about the dark bases, and now and then might be heard the faint muttering of the thunder. Dolph rose and sought about to see if any path led from the shore, but all was savage and trackless. The rocks were piled upon each other; great trunks of trees lay shattered about, as they had been blown down by the strong winds which draw through these mountains, or had fallen through age. The rocks, too, were overhung with wild vines and briers, which completely matted themselves together, and opposed a barrier to all ingress; every movement that he made shook down a shower from the dripping foliage. He attempted to scale one of these almost per-

pendicular heights; but, though strong and agile, he found it an Herculean undertaking. Often he was supported merely by crumbling projections of the rock, and sometimes he clung to roots and branches of trees, and hung almost suspended in the air. The wood-pigeon came cleaving his whistling flight by him, and the eagle screamed from the brow of the impending cliff. As he was thus clambering, he was on the point of seizing hold of a shrub to aid his ascent, when something rustled among the leaves, and he saw a snake quivering along like lightning, almost from under his hand. It coiled itself up immediately, in an attitude of defiance, with flattened head, distended jaws, and quickly vibrating tongue, that played like a little flame about its mouth. Dolph's heart turned faint within him, and he had wellnigh let go his hold and tumbled down the precipice. The serpent stood on the defensive but for an instant; and finding there was no attack, glided away into a cleft in the rock. Dolph's eye followed it with fearful intensity, and saw a nest of adders, knotted, and writhing, and hissing in the chasm. He hastened with all his speed from so frightful a neighborhood. His imagination, full of this new horror, saw an adder in every curling vine, and heard the tail of a rattlesnake in every dry leaf that rustled.

At length he succeeded in scrambling to the summit of a precipice; but it was covered by a dense forest. Wherever he could gain a look-out between the trees, he beheld heights and cliffs, one rising beyond another, until huge mountains overtopped the whole. There were no signs of cultivation; no smoke curling among the trees to indicate a human residence. every thing was wild and solitary. As he was standing on the edge of a precipice overlooking a deep ravine fringed with trees, his feet detached a great fragment of rock; it fell, crashing its way through the tree-tops, down into the chasm. A loud whoop, or rather yell, issued from the bottom of the glen; the moment after there was the report of a gun; and a ball came whistling over his head, cutting the twigs and leaves, and burying itself deep in the bark of a chestnut-tree.

Dolph did not wait for a second shot, but made a precipitate retreat, fearing every moment to hear the enemy in pursuit. He succeeded, however, in returning unmolested to the shore, and determined to penetrate no farther into a country so beset with savage perils.

He sat himself down, dripping, disconsolately, on a stone. What was to be done? where was he to shelter himself? The hour of repose was approaching; the birds were seeking their

nests, the bat began to flit about in the twilight, and the night-hawk, soaring high in the heaven, seemed to be calling out the stars. Night gradually closed in, and wrapt every thing in gloom; and though it was the latter part of summer, the breeze stealing along the river, and among these dripping forests, was chilly and penetrating, especially to a half-drowned man.

As he sat drooping and despondent in this comfortless condition, he perceived a light gleaming through the trees near the shore, where the winding of the river made a deep bay. It cheered him with the hope of a human habitation, where he might get something to appease the clamorous cravings of his stomach, and what was equally necessary in his shipwrecked condition, a comfortable shelter for the night. With extreme difficulty he made his way toward the light, along ledges of rocks, down which he was in danger of sliding into the river, and over great trunks of fallen trees; some of which had been blown down in the late storm, and lay so thickly together that he had to struggle through their branches. At length he came to the brow of a rock overhanging a small dell, whence the light proceeded. It was from a fire at the foot of a great tree in the midst of a grassy interval or plat among the

rocks. The fire cast up a red glare among the gray crags and impending trees, leaving chasms of deep gloom, that resembled entrances to caverns. A small brook rippled close by, betrayed by the quivering reflection of the flame. There were two figures moving about the fire, and others squatted before it. As they were between him and the light, they were in complete shadow; but one of them happening to move round to the opposite side, Dolph was startled at perceiving, by the glare falling on painted features, and glittering on silver ornaments, that he was an Indian. He now looked more narrowly, and saw guns leaning against a tree, and a dead body lying on the ground. Here was the very foe that had fired at him from the glen. He endeavored to retreat quietly, not caring to intrust himself to these half-human beings in so savage and lonely a place. It was too late; the Indian, with that eagle quickness of eye so remarkable in his race, perceived something stirring among the bushes on the rock; he seized one of the guns that leaned against the tree; one moment more, and Dolph might have had his passion for adventure cured by a bullet. He halloed loudly, with the Indian salutation of friendship; the whole party sprang upon their feet; the salutation was returned, and the straggler was invited to join them at the fire.

On approaching, he found, to his consolation, the party was composed of white men, as well as Indians. One, evidently the principal personage, or commander, was seated on a trunk of a tree before the fire. He was a large, stout man, somewhat advanced in life, but hale and hearty. His face was bronzed almost to the color of an Indian's; he had strong but rather jovial features, an aquiline nose, and a mouth shaped like a mastiff's. His face was half thrown in shade by a broad hat, with a buck's tail in it. His gray hair hung short in his neck. He wore a hunting-frock, with Indian leggins, and moccasons, and a tomahawk in the broad wampum-belt round his waist. As Dolph caught a distinct view of his person and features, something reminded him of the old man of the haunted house. The man before him, however, was different in dress and age; he was more cheery, too, in aspect, and it was hard to find where the vague resemblance lay; but a resemblance there certainly was. Dolph felt some degree of awe in approaching him, but was assured by a frank, hearty welcome. He was still further encouraged by perceiving that the dead body, which had caused him some alarm, was that of a deer; and his satisfaction was complete in discerning, by savory steams from a kettle, suspended by a hooked stick

over the fire, that there was a part cooking for the evening's repast.

He had, in fact, fallen in with a rambling hunting-party, such as often took place in those days among the settlers along the river. The hunter is always hospitable ; and nothing makes men more social and unceremonious than meeting in the wilderness. The commander of the party poured out a dram of cheering liquor, which he gave him with a merry leer, to warm his heart, and ordered one of his followers to fetch some garments from a pinnace, moored in a cove close by, while those in which our hero was dripping might be dried before the fire.

Dolph found, as he had suspected, that the shot from the glen, which had come so near giving him his quietus when on the precipice, was from the party before him. He had nearly crushed one of them by the fragments of rock which he had detached ; and the jovial old hunter, in the broad hat and buck-tail, had fired at the place where he saw the bushes move, supposing it to be some wild animal. He laughed heartily at the blunder, it being what is considered an exceeding good joke among hunters ; "but faith, my lad," said he, "if I had but caught a glimpse of you to take sight at, you would have followed the rock.

Antony Vander Heyden is seldom known to miss his aim." These last words were at once a clue to Dolph's curiosity; and a few questions let him completely into the character of the man before him, and of his band of woodland rangers. The commander in the broad hat and hunting-frock was no less a personage than the Heer Antony Vander Heyden, of Albany, of whom Dolph had many a time heard. He was, in fact, the hero of many a story, his singular humors and whimsical habits being matters of wonder to his quiet Dutch neighbors. As he was a man of property, having had a father before him from whom he inherited large tracts of wild land, and whole barrelfuls of wampum, he could indulge his humors without control. Instead of staying quietly at home, eating and drinking at regular meal-times, amusing himself by smoking his pipe on the bench before the door, and then turning into a comfortable bed at night, he delighted in all kinds of rough, wild expeditions; never so happy as when on a hunting-party in the wilderness, sleeping under trees or bark-sheds, or cruising down the river, or on some woodland lake, fishing and fowling, and living the Lord knows how.

He was a great friend to Indians, and to an Indian mode of life, which he considered true

natural liberty and manly enjoyment. When at home he had always several Indian hangers-on who loitered about his house, sleeping like hounds in the sunshine, or preparing hunting and fishing tackle for some new expedition, or shooting at marks with bows and arrows.

Over these vagrant beings Heer Antony had as perfect command as a huntsman over his pack, though they were great nuisances to the regular people of his neighborhood. As he was a rich man, no one ventured to thwart his humors; indeed, his hearty, joyous manner made him universally popular. He would troll a Dutch song as he tramped along the street; hail every one a mile off, and when he entered a house, would slap the good man familiarly on the back, shake him by the hand till he roared, and kiss his wife and daughter before his face,—in short, there was no pride nor ill humor about Heer Antony.

Besides his Indian hangers-on, he had three or four humble friends among the white men, who looked up to him as a patron, and had the run of his kitchen, and the favor of being taken with him occasionally on his expeditions. With a medley of such retainers he was at present on a cruise along the shores of the Hudson, in a pinnace kept for his own recreation. There were two white men with him,

dressed partly in the Indian style, with moccasons and hunting-shirts; the rest of his crew consisted of four favorite Indians. They had been prowling about the river, without any definite object, until they found themselves in the highlands, where they had passed two or three days, hunting the deer which still lingered among these mountains.

"It is lucky for you, young man," said Antony Vander Heyden, "that you happened to be knocked overboard to-day, as to-morrow morning we start early on our return homewards, and you might then have looked in vain for a meal among the mountains—but come, lads, stir about! stir about! Let 's see what prog we have for supper; the kettle has boiled long enough; my stomach cries cupboard, and I 'll warrant our guest is in no mood to dally with his trencher."

There was a bustle now in the little encampment; one took off the kettle and turned a part of the contents into a huge wooden bowl. Another prepared a flat rock for a table, while a third brought various utensils from the pinnace; Heer Antony himself brought a flask or two of precious liquor from his own private locker, knowing his boon companions too well to trust any of them with the key.

A rude but hearty repast was soon spread,

consisting of venison smoking from the kettle, with cold bacon, boiled Indian corn, and mighty loaves of good brown household bread. Never had Dolph made a more delicious repast; and when he had washed it down with two or three draughts from the Heer Antony's flask, and felt the jolly liquor sending its warmth through his veins, and glowing round his very heart, he would not have changed his situation, no, not with the governor of the province.

The Heer Antony, too, grew chirping and joyous; told half a dozen fat stories, at which his white followers laughed immoderately, though the Indians, as usual, maintained an invincible gravity.

"This is your true life, my boy!" said he, slapping Dolph on the shoulder; "a man is never a man till he can defy wind and weather, range woods and wilds, sleep under a tree, and live on basswood leaves!"

And then would he sing a stave or two of a Dutch drinking song, swaying a short squab Dutch bottle in his hand, while his myrmidons would join in the chorus, until the woods echoed again,—as the good old song has it:

"They all with a shout made the elements ring
So soon as the office was o'er,
To feasting they went, with true merriment,
And tippled strong liquor gillore."

In the midst of his joviality, however, Heer Antony did not lose sight of discretion. Though he pushed the bottle without reserve to Dolph, he always took care to help his followers himself, knowing the beings he had to deal with, and was particular in granting but a moderate allowance to the Indians. The repast being ended, the Indians having drunk their liquor, and smoked their pipes, now wrapped themselves in their blankets, stretched themselves on the ground, with their feet to the fire, and soon fell aleep, like so many tired hounds. The rest of the party remained chatting before the fire, which the gloom of the forest, and the dampness of the air from the late storm, rendered extremely grateful and comforting. The conversation gradually moderated from the hilarity of supper-time, and turned upon hunting adventures and exploits and perils in the wilderness, many of which were so strange and improbable that I will not venture to repeat them, lest the veracity of Antony Vander Heyden and his comrades should be brought into question. There were many legendary tales told, also, about the river, and the settlements on its borders, in which valuable kind of lore the Heer Antony seemed deeply versed. As the sturdy bush-beater sat in a twisted root of a tree, that served him for an arm-chair, deal-

ing forth these wild stories, with the fire gleaming on his strongly marked visage, Dolph was again repeatedly perplexed by something that reminded him of the phantom of the haunted house; some vague resemblance not to be fixed upon any precise feature or lineament, but pervading the general air of his countenance and figure.

The circumstance of Dolph's falling overboard led to the relation of divers disasters and singular mishaps that had befallen voyagers on this great river, particularly in the earlier periods of colonial history, most of which the Heer deliberately attributed to supernatural causes. Dolph stared at this suggestion, but the old gentleman assured him it was very currently believed by the settlers along the river that these highlands were under the dominion of supernatural and mischievous beings, which seemed to have taken some pique against the Dutch colonists in the early time of the settlement. In consequence of this they have ever taken particular delight in venting their spleen, and indulging their humors upon the Dutch skippers, bothering them with flaws, headwinds, counter-currents, and all kinds of impediments, insomuch that a Dutch navigator was always obliged to be exceedingly wary and deliberate in his proceedings; to come to an-

chor at dusk; to drop his peak, or to take in sail, whenever he saw a swag-bellied cloud rolling over the mountains; in short, to take so many precautions that he was often apt to be an incredible time in toiling up the river.

Some, he said, believed these mischievous powers of the air to be the evil spirits conjured up by the Indian wizards, in the early times of the province, to revenge themselves on the strangers who had dispossessed them of their country. They even attributed to their incantations the misadventure which befell the renowned Hendrick Hudson, when he sailed so gallantly up this river in quest of a northwest passage, and, as he thought, ran his ship aground; which they affirm was nothing more nor less than a spell of these same wizards, to prevent his getting to China in this direction.

The greater part, however, Heer Antony observed, accounted for all the extraordinary circumstances attending this river, and the perplexities of the skippers who navigated it, by the old legend of the Storm-ship which haunted Point-no-point. On finding Dolph to be utterly ignorant of this tradition, the Heer stared at him for a moment with surprise, and wondered where he had passed his life, to be uninformed on so important a point of history. To pass away the remainder of the evening, therefore,

he undertook the tale, as far as his memory would serve, in the very words in which it had been written out by Mynheer Selyne, an early poet of the New Nederlandts. Giving, then, a stir to the fire, that sent up its sparks among the trees like a little volcano, he adjusted himself comfortably in his root of a tree, and throwing back his head, and closing his eyes for a few moments, to summon up his recollection, he related the following legend.

THE STORM-SHIP.

In the golden age of the province of the New Netherlands, when under the sway of Wouter Van Twiller, otherwise called the Doubter, the people of the Manhattoes were alarmed one sultry afternoon, just about the time of the summer solstice, by a tremendous storm of thunder and lightning. The rain fell in such torrents as absolutely to spatter up and smoke along the ground. It seemed as if the thunder rattled and rolled over the very roofs of the houses; the lightning was seen to play about the church of St. Nicholas, and to strive three times, in vain, to strike its weathercock. Garret Van Horne's new chimney was split almost from top to bottom; and Doffue Middleberger was struck speechless from his bald-faced mare, just as he

was riding into town. In a word, it was one of those unparalleled storms which only happen once within the memory of that venerable personage known in all towns by the appellation of "the oldest inhabitant."

Great was the terror of the good old women of the Manhattoes. They gathered their children together, and took refuge in the cellars; after having hung a shoe on the iron point of every bedpost, lest it should attract the lightning. At length the storm abated; the thunder sank into a growl, and the setting sun, breaking from under the fringed borders of the clouds, made the broad bosom of the bay to gleam like a sea of molten gold.

The word was given from the fort that a ship was standing up the bay. It passed from mouth to mouth, and street to street, and soon put the little capital in a bustle. The arrival of a ship, in those early times of the settlement, was an event of vast importance to the inhabitants. It brought them news from the old world, from the land of their birth, from which they were so completely severed: to the yearly ship, too, they looked for their supply of luxuries, of finery, of comforts, and almost of necessaries. The good vrouw could not have her new cap nor new gown until the arrival of the ship; the artist waited for it for his tools, the burgomaster

for his pipe and his supply of Hollands, the schoolboy for his top and marbles, and the lordly landholder for the bricks with which he was to build his new mansion. Thus every one, rich and poor, great and small, looked out for the arrival of the ship. It was the great yearly event of the town of New Amsterdam; and from one end of the year to the other, the ship —the ship—the ship—was the continual topic of conversation.

The news from the fort, therefore, brought all the populace down to the Battery, to behold the wished-for sight. It was not exactly the time when she had been expected to arrive, and the circumstance was a matter of some speculation. Many were the groups collected about the Battery. Here and there might be seen a burgomaster, of slow and pompous gravity, giving his opinion with great confidence to a crowd of old women and idle boys. At another place was a knot of old weather-beaten fellows, who had been seamen or fishermen in their times, and were great authorities on such occasions; these gave different opinions, and caused great disputes among their several adherents: but the man most looked up to, and followed and watched by the crowd, was Hans Van Pelt, an old Dutch sea-captain retired from service, the nautical oracle of the place. He reconnoitred

the ship through an ancient telescope, covered with tarry canvas, hummed a Dutch tune to himself, and said nothing. A hum, however, from Hans Van Pelt, had always more weight with the public than a speech from another man.

In the meantime the ship became more distinct to the naked eye ; she was a stout, round, Dutch-built vessel, with high bow and poop, and bearing Dutch colors. The evening sun glided her bellying canvas, as she came ridiug over the long waving billows. The sentinel who had given notice of her approach declared that he first got sight or her when she was in the centre of the bay, and that she broke suddenly on his sight just as if she had come out of the bosom of the black thunder-cloud. The by-standers looked at Hans Van Pelt to see what he would say to this report. Hans Van Pelt screwed his mouth closer together, and said nothing, upon which some shook their heads, and others shrugged their shoulders.

The ship was now repeatedly hailed, but made no reply, and passing by the fort stood on up the Hudson. A gun was brought to bear on her, and, with some difficulty, loaded and fired by Hans Van Pelt, the garrison not being expert in artillery. The shot seemed absolutely to pass through the ship, and skip along the

water on the other side, but no notice was taken of it! What was strange, she had all her sails set, and sailed right against wind and tide, which were both down the river. Upon this Hans Van Pelt, who was likewise harbor-master, ordered his boat, and set off to board her; but, after rowing two or three hours, he returned without success. Sometimes he would get within one or two hundred yards of her, and then, in a twinkling, she would be half a mile off. Some said it was because his oarsmen, who were rather pursy and short-winded, stopped every now and then to take breath, and spit on their hands; but this, it is probable, was a mere scandal. He got near enough, however, to see the crew, who were all dressed in the Dutch style, the officers in doublets and high hats and feathers. Not a word was spoken by any one on board; they stood as motionless as so many statues, and the ship seemed as if left to her own government. Thus she kept on, away up the river, lessening and lessening in the evening sunshine, until she faded from sight, like a little white cloud melting away in the summer sky.

The appearance of this ship threw the governor into one of the deepest doubts that ever beset him in the whole course of his administration. Fears were entertained for the secur-

ity of the infant settlements on the river lest this might be an enemy's ship in disguise, sent to take possession. The governor called together his council repeatedly to assist him with their conjectures. He sat in his chair of state, built of timber from the sacred forest of the Hague, smoking his long jasmin pipe, and listening to all that his counsellors had to say on a subject about which they knew nothing; but in spite of all the conjecturing of the sagest and oldest heads, the governor still continued to doubt.

Messengers were dispatched to different places on the river; but they returned without any tidings—the ship had made no port. Day after day, and week after week, elapsed, but she never returned down the Hudson. As, however, the council seemed solicitous for intelligence, they had it in abundance. The captains of the sloops seldom arrived without bringing some report of having seen the strange ship at different parts of the river; sometimes near the Pallisadoes, sometimes off Croton Point, and sometimes in the highlands; but she never was reported as having been seen above the highlands. The crews of the sloops, it is true, generally differed among themselves in their accounts of these apparitions; but that may have arisen from the uncertain situations in which

they saw her. Sometimes it was by the flashes of the thunder-storm lighting up a pitchy night, and giving glimpses of her careering across Tapaan Zee, or the wide waste of Haverstraw Bay. At one moment she would appear close upon them, as if likely to run them down, and would throw them into great bustle and alarm; but the next flash would show her far off, always sailing against the wind. Sometimes, in quiet moonlight nights, she would be seen under some high bluff of the highlands, all in deep shadow, excepting her topsails glittering in the moonbeams. By the time, however, that the voyagers reached the place no ship was to be seen, and when they had passed on for some distance, and looked back, behold! there she was again, with her topsails in the moonshine! Her appearance was always just after, or just before, or just in the midst of unruly weather, and she was known among the skippers and voyagers of the Hudson by the name of "the storm-ship."

These reports perplexed the governor and his council more than ever, and it would be endless to repeat the conjectures and opinions uttered on the subject. Some quoted cases in point of ships seen off the coast of New England navigated by witches and goblins. Old Hans Van Pelt, who had been more than once

to the Dutch colony at the Cape of Good Hope, insisted that this must be the Flying Dutchman which had so long haunted Table Bay; but being unable to make port had now sought another harbor. Others suggested that if it really was a supernatural apparition, as there was every natural reason to believe, it might be Hendrick Hudson and his crew of the *Half-moon*, who it was well known had once run aground in the upper part of the river in seeking a northwest passage to China. This opinion had very little weight with the governor; but it passed current out of doors; for indeed it had already been reported that Hendrick Hudson and his crew haunted the Kaatskill Mountain, and it appeared very reasonable to suppose that his ship might infest the river where the enterprise was baffled, or that it might bear the shadowy crew to their periodical revels in the mountains.

Other events occurred to occupy the thoughts and doubts of the sage Wouter and his council, and the storm-ship ceased to be a subject of deliberation at the board. It continued, however, a matter of popular belief and marvellous anecdote through the whole time of the Dutch government, and particularly just before the capture of New Amsterdam and the subjugation of the province by the English squadron.

About that time the storm-ship was repeatedly seen in the Tappaan Zee, and about Weehawk, and even down as far as Hoboken; and her appearance was supposed to be ominous of the approaching squall in public affairs, and the downfall of Dutch domination.

Since that time we have no authentic accounts of her, though it is said she still haunts the highlands, and cruises about Point-no-point. People who live along the river insist that they sometimes see her in summer moonlight; and that in a deep still midnight they have heard the chant of her crew, as if heaving the lead; but sights and sounds are so deceptive along the mountainous shores, and about the wide bays and long reaches of this great river, that I confess I have very strong doubts upon the subject.

It is certain, nevertheless, that strange things have been seen in these highlands in storms, which are considered as connected with the old story of the ship. The captains of the river craft talk of a little bulbous-bottomed Dutch goblin, in trunk-hose and sugar-loafed hat, with a speaking-trumpet in his hand, which they say keeps about the Dunderberg.* They declare that they have heard him, in stormy

* *I. e.*, The "Thunder-Mountain," so called from its echoes.

weather, in the midst of the turmoil, giving orders in Low Dutch for the piping up of a fresh gust of wind, or the rattling off of another thunder-clap. That sometimes he has been seen surrounded by a crew of little imps in broad breeches and short doublets; tumbling head-over-heels in the rack and mist, and playing a thousand gambols in the air; or buzzing like a swarm of flies about Antony's Nose; and that, at such times, the hurry-scurry of the storm was always greatest. One time a sloop, in passing by the Dunderberg, was overtaken by a thunder-gust, that came scouring round the mountain, and seemed to burst just over the vessel. Though tight and well ballasted, she labored dreadfully, and the water came over the gunwale. All the crew were amazed when it was discovered that there was a little white sugar-loaf hat on the mast-head, known at once to be the hat of the Heer of the Dunderberg. Nobody, however, dared to climb to the mast-head, and get rid of this terrible hat. The sloop continued laboring and rocking, as if she would have rolled her mast overboard, and seemed in continual danger either of upsetting or of running on shore. In this way she drove quite through the highlands, until she had passed Pollopol's Island, where, it is said, the jurisdiction of the Dunderberg potentate ceases.

No sooner had she passed this bourn, than the little hat spun up into the air like a top, whirled up all the clouds into a vortex, and hurried them back to the summit of the Dunderberg; while the sloop righted herself, and sailed on as quietly as if in a mill-pond. Nothing saved her from utter wreck but the fortunate circumstance of having a horseshoe nailed against the mast, —a wise precaution against evil spirits, since adopted by all the Dutch captains that navigate this haunted river.

There is another story told of this foul-weather urchin, by Skipper Daniel Ouselsticker, of Fishkill, who was never known to tell a lie. He declared that, in a severe squall he saw him seated astride of his bowsprit, riding the sloop ashore, full butt against Antony's Nose, and that he was exorcised by Dominie Van Gieson, of Esopus, who happened to be on board, and who sang the hymn of St. Nicholas; whereupon the goblin threw himself up in the air like a ball, and went off in a whirlwind, carrying away with him the nightcap of the dominie's wife, which was discovered the next Sunday morning hanging on the weathercock of Esopus church-steeple, at least forty miles off! Several events of this kind having taken place, the regular skippers of the river, for a long time, did not venture to pass the Dunderberg

without lowering their peaks, out of homage to the Heer of the mountain; and it was observed that all such as paid this tribute of respect were suffered to pass unmolested.*

"Such," said Antony Vander Heyden, "are a few of the stories written down by Selyne the poet, concerning the storm-ship,—which he affirms to have brought a crew of mischievous imps into the province, from some old ghost-ridden country of Europe. I could give a host more, if necessary; for all the accidents that so

* Among the superstitions which prevailed in the colonies, during the early times of the settlements, there seems to have been a singular one about phantom ships. The superstitious fancies of men are always apt to turn upon those objects which concern their daily occupations. The solitary ship, which, from year to year, came like a raven in the wilderness, bringing to the inhabitants of a settlement the comforts of life from the world from which they were cut off, was apt to be present to their dreams, whether sleeping or waking. The accidental sight from shore of a sail gliding along the horizon in those as yet lonely seas, was apt to be a matter of much talk and speculation. There is mention made in one of the early New England writers of a ship navigated by witches, with a great horse that stood by the mainmast. I have met with another story, somewhere, of a ship that drove on shore, in fair, sunny, tranquil weather, with sails all set, and a table spread in the cabin, as if to regale a number of guests, yet not a living being on board. These phantom ships always sailed in the eye of the wind; or ploughed their way with great velocity, making the smooth sea foam before their bows, when not a breath of air was stirring.

Moore has finely wrought up one of these legends of the sea into a little tale, which, within a small compass, contains the very essence of this species of supernatural fiction. I allude to his "Spectre Ship," bound to Deadman's Isle.

often befall the river craft in the highlands are said to be tricks played off by these imps of the Dunderberg; but I see that you are nodding, so let us turn in for the night."

The moon had just raised her silver horns above the round back of Old Bull Hill, and lit up the gray rocks and shagged forests, and glittered on the waving bosom of the river. The night dew was falling, and the late gloomy mountains began to soften and put on a gray aërial tint in the dewy light. The hunters stirred the fire, and threw on fresh fuel to qualify the damp of the night air. They then prepared a bed of branches and dry leaves under a ledge of rocks for Dolph; while Antony Vander Heyden, wrapping himself in a huge coat of skins, stretched himself before the fire. It was some time, however, before Dolph could close his eyes. He lay contemplating the strange scene before him: the wild woods and rocks around; the fire throwing fitful gleams on the faces of the sleeping savages; and Heer Antony, too, who so singularly, yet vaguely, reminded him of the nightly visitant to the haunted house. Now and then he heard the cry of some animal from the forest; or the hooting of the owl; or the notes of the whip-poorwill, which seemed to abound among these solitudes; or the splash of a sturgeon, leaping

out of the river and falling back full length on its placid surface. He contrasted all this with his accustomed nest in the garret room of the doctor's mansion;—where the only sounds at night were the church clock telling the hour; the drowsy voice of the watchman, drawling out all was well; the deep snoring of the doctor's clubbed nose from below stairs; or the cautious labors of some carpenter rat gnawing in the wainscot. His thoughts then wandered to his poor old mother; what would she think of his mysterious disappearance—what anxiety and distress would she not suffer? This thought would continually intrude itself to mar his present enjoyment. It brought with it a feeling of pain and compunction, and he fell asleep with the tears yet standing in his eyes.

Were this a mere tale of fancy, here would be a fine opportunity for weaving in strange adventures among these wild mountains, and roving hunters; and, after involving my hero in a variety of perils and difficulties, rescuing him from them all by some miraculous contrivance; but as this is absolutely a true story, I must content myself with simple facts, and keep to probabilities.

At an early hour of the next day, therefore, after a hearty morning's meal, the encampment broke up, and our adventurers embarked in the

pinnace of Antony Vander Heyden. There being no wind for the sails, the Indians rowed her gently along keeping time to a kind of chant of one of the white men. The day was serene and beautiful; the river without a wave; and as the vessel cleft the glassy water, it left a long, undulating track behind. The crows, who had scented the hunter's banquet, were already gathering and hovering in the air, just where a column of thin, blue smoke, rising from among the trees, showed the place of their last night's quarters. As they coasted along the bases of the mountains, the Heer Antony pointed out to Dolph a bald eagle, the sovereign of these regions, who sat perched on a dry tree that projected over the river, and, with eye turned upwards, seemed to be drinking in the splendor of the morning sun. Their approach disturbed the monarch's meditations. He first spread one wing, and then the other; balanced himself for a moment; and then, quitting his perch with dignified composure, wheeled slowly over their heads. Dolph snatched up a gun, and sent a whistling ball after him, that cut some of the feathers from his wing; the report of the gun leaped sharply from rock to rock, and awakened a thousand echoes; but the monarch of the air sailed calmly on, ascending higher and higher, and wheeling widely as he ascend-

ed, soaring up the green bosom of the woody mountain, until he disappeared over the brow of a beetling precipice. Dolph felt in a manner rebuked by this proud tranquillity, and almost reproached himself for having so wantonly insulted that majestic bird. Heer Antony told him, laughing, to remember that he was not yet out of the territories of the lord of the Dunderberg; and an old Indian shook his head and observed that there was bad luck in killing an eagle; the hunter, on the contrary, should always leave him a portion of his spoils.

Nothing, however, occurred to molest them on their voyage. They passed pleasantly through magnificent and lonely scenes, until they came to where Pollopol's Island lay, like a floating bower, at the extremity of the highlands. Here they landed, until the heat of the day should abate, or a breeze spring up that might supersede the labor of the oar. Some prepared the mid-day meal, while others reposed under the shade of the trees in luxurious summer indolence, looking drowsily forth upon the beauty of the scene. On the one side were the highlands, vast and cragged, feathered to the top with forests, and throwing their shadows on the glassy water that dimpled at their feet. On the other side was a wide expanse of the river like a broad lake, with long sunny reaches, and

green headlands; and the distant line of Shawangunk mountains waving along a clear horison, or checkered by a fleecy cloud.

But I forbear to dwell on the particulars of their cruise along the river; this vagrant amphibious life, careering across silver sheets of water; coasting wild woodland shores; banqueting on shady promontories, with the spreading tree overhead, the river curling its light foam to one's feet, and distant mountain, and rock, and tree, and snowy cloud, and deep-blue sky, all mingling in summer beauty before one; all this, though never cloying in the enjoyment, would be but tedious in narration.

When encamped by the water-side, some of the party would go into the woods and hunt; others would fish; sometimes they would amuse themselves by shooting at a mark, by leaping, by running, by wrestling; and Dolph gained great favor in the eyes of Antony Vander Heyden, by his skill and adroitness in all these exercises, which the Heer considered as the highest of manly accomplishments.

Thus did they coast jollily on, choosing only the pleasant hours for voyaging, sometimes in the cool morning dawn, sometimes in the sober evening twilight, and sometimes when the moonshine spangled the crisp curling waves that whispered along the sides of their little

bark. Never had Dolph felt so completely in his element; never had he met with any thing so completely to his taste as this wild, hap-hazard life. He was the very man to second Antony Vander Heyden in his rambling humors, and gained continually on his affections. The heart of the old bushwacker yearned toward the young man, who seemed thus growing up in his own likeness; and as they approached to the end of their voyage, he could not help inquiring a little into his history. Dolph frankly told him his course of life, his severe medical studies, his little proficiency, and his very dubious prospects. The Heer was shocked to find that such amazing talents and accomplishments were to be cramped and buried under a doctor's wig. He had a sovereign contempt for the healing art, having never had any other physician than the butcher. He bore a mortal grudge to all kinds of study also, ever since he had been flogged about an unintelligible book when he was a boy. But to think that a young fellow like Dolph, of such wonderful abilities, who could shoot, fish, run, jump, ride, and wrestle, should be obliged to roll pills, and administer juleps for a living—'t was monstrous! He told Dolph never to despair, but to "throw physic to the dogs," for a young fellow of his prodigious talents could never fail to make his way,

"As you seem to have no acquaintance in Albany," said Heer Antony, "you shall go home with me, and remain under my roof until you can look about you, and in the meantime we can take an occasional bout at shooting and fishing, for it is a pity that such talents should lie idle."

Dolph, who was at the mercy of chance, was not hard to be persuaded. Indeed, on turning over matters in his mind, which he did very sagely and deliberately, he could not but think that Antony Vander Heyden was, "somehow or other," connected with the story of the haunted house; that the misadventure in the highlands, which had thrown them so strangely together, was, "somehow or other," to work out something good; in short, there is nothing so convenient as this "somehow or other" way of accommodating one's self to circumstances; it is the main stay of a heedless actor, and tardy reasoner, like Dolph Heyliger; and he who can, in this loose, easy way, link foregone evil to anticipated good, possesses a secret of happiness almost equal to the philosopher's stone.

On their arrival at Albany, the sight of Dolph's companion seemed to cause universal satisfaction. Many were the greetings at the riverside, and the salutations in the streets;

the dogs bounded before him ; the boys whooped as he passed ; everybody seemed to know Antony Vander Heyden. Dolph followed on in silence, admiring the neatness of this worthy burgh, for in those days Albany was in all its glory, and inhabited almost exclusively by the descendants of the original Dutch settlers, not having as yet been discovered and colonized by the restless people of New England. Every thing was quiet and orderly ; every thing was conducted calmly and leisurely ; no hurry, no bustle, no struggling and scrambling for existence. The grass grew about the unpaved streets, and relieved the eye by its refreshing verdure. Tall sycamores or pendent willows shaded the houses, with caterpillars swinging, in long silken strings, from their branches ; or moths, fluttering about like coxcombs, in joy at their gay transformation. The houses were built in the old Dutch style, with the gable-ends towards the street. The thrifty housewife was seated on a bench before her door, in close-crimped cap, bright-flowered gown, and white apron, busily employed in knitting. The husband smoked his pipe on the opposite bench ; and the little pet negro girl, seated on the step at her mistress's feet, was industriously plyiug her needle. The swallows sported about the eaves, or skimmed along the streets, and brought

back some rich booty for their clamorous young; and the little housekeeping wren flew in and out of a Liliputian house, or an old hat nailed against the wall. The cows were coming home, lowing through the streets, to be milked at their owner's door; and if, perchance, there were any loiterers, some negro urchin, with a long goad, was gently urging them homewards.

As Dolph's companion passed on, he received a tranquil nod from the burghers, and a friendly word from their wives, all calling him familiarly by the name of Antony; for it was the custom in this stronghold of the patriarchs, where they had all grown up together from childhood, to call each other by the Christian name. The Heer did not pause to have his usual jokes with them, for he was impatient to reach his home. At length they arrived at his mansion. It was of some magnitude, in the Dutch style, with large iron figures on the gables, that gave the date of its erection, and showed that it had been built in the earliest times of the settlement.

The news of Heer Antony's arrival had preceded him, and the whole household was on the lookout. A crew of negroes, large and small, had collected in front of the house to receive him. The old, white-headed ones, who had grown gray in his service, grinned for joy, and made many awkward bows and grimaces, and

the little ones capered about his knees. But the most happy being in the household was a little, plump, blooming lass, his only child, and the darling of his heart. She came bounding out of the house; but the sight of a strange young man with her father called up, for a moment, all the bashfulness of a home-bred damsel. Dolph gazed at her with wonder and delight; never had he seen, as he thought, any thing so comely in the shape of a woman. She was dressed in the good old Dutch taste, with long stays, and full, short petticoats, so admirably adapted to show and set off the female form. Her hair, turned up under a small round cap, displayed the fairness of her forehead; she had fine, blue, laughing eyes, a trim, slender waist, and soft swell—but, in a word, she was a little Dutch divinity; and Dolph, who never stopped half-way in a new impulse, fell desperately in love with her.

Dolph was now ushered into the house with a hearty welcome. In the interior was a mingled display of Heer Antony's taste and habits, and of the opulence of his predecessors. The chambers were furnished with good old mahogany; the buffets and cupboards glittered with embossed silver and painted china. Over the parlor fireplace was, as usual, the family coat of arms, painted and framed; above which was a long

duck fowling-piece, flanked by an Indian pouch, and a powder-horn. The room was decorated with many Indian articles, such as pipes of peace, tomahawks, scalping-knives, hunting-pouches, and belts of wampum; and there were various kinds of fishing-tackle, and two or three fowling-pieces in the corners. The household affairs seemed to be conducted, in some measure, after the master's humors; corrected, perhaps, by a little quiet management of the daughter's. There was a great degree of patriarchal simplicity, and good-humored indulgence. The negroes came into the room without being called, merely to look at their master, and hear of his adventures; they would stand listening at the door until he had finished a story, and then go off on a broad grin, to repeat it in the kitchen. A couple of pet negro children were playing about the floor with the dogs, and sharing with them their bread and butter. All the domestics looked hearty and happy; and when the table was set for the evening repast, the variety and abundance of good household luxuries bore testimony to the open-handed liberality of the Heer, and the notable housewifery of his daughter.

In the evening there dropped in several of the worthies of the place, the Van Renssellaers, and the Gansevoorts, and the Rosebooms, and

others of Antony Vander Heyden's intimates, to hear an account of his expedition; for he was the Sindbad of Albany, and his exploits and adventures were favorite topics of conversation among the inhabitants. While these sat gossiping together about the door of the hall, and telling long twilight stories, Dolph was cosily seated, entertaining the daughter, on a window-bench. He had already got on intimate terms; for those were not times of false reserve and idle ceremony; and, besides, there is something wonderfully propitious to a lover's suit in the delightful dusk of a long summer evening; it gives courage to the most timid tongue, and hides the blushes of the bashful. The stars alone twinkled brightly; and now and then a fire-fly streamed his transient light before the window, or, wandering into the room, flew gleaming about the ceiling.

What Dolph whispered in her ear that long summer evening, it is impossible to say; his words were so low and indistinct, that they never reached the ear of the historian. It is probable, however, that they were to the purpose; for he had a natural talent at pleasing the sex, and was never long in company with a petticoat without paying proper court to it. In the meantime the visitors, one by one, departed; Antony Vander Heyden, who had fairly

talked himself silent, sat nodding alone in his chair by the door, when he was suddenly aroused by a hearty salute with which Dolph Heyliger had unguardedly rounded off one of his periods, and which echoed through the still chamber like the report of a pistol. The Heer started up, rubbed his eyes, called for lights, and observed that it was high time to go to bed; though, on parting for the night, he squeezed Dolph heartily by the hand, looked kindly in his face, and shook his head knowingly; for the Heer well remembered what he himself had been at the youngster's age.

The chamber in which our hero was lodged was spacious, and panelled with oak. It was furnished with clothes-presses, and mighty chests of drawers, well waxed, and glittering with brass ornaments. These contained ample stock of family linen; for the Dutch housewives had always a laudable pride in showing off their household treasures to strangers.

Dolph's mind, however, was too full to take particular note of the objects around him; yet he could not help continually comparing the free, open-hearted cheeriness of this establishment with the starveling, sordid, joyless housekeeping at Doctor Knipperhausen's. Still something marred the enjoyment: the idea that he must take leave of his hearty host, and

pretty hostess, and cast himself once more adrift upon the world. To linger here would be folly: he should only get deeper in love; and for a poor varlet, like himself, to aspire to the daughter of the great Heer Vander Heyden —it was madness to think of such a thing! The very kindness that the girl had shown towards him prompted him, on reflection, to hasten his departure: it would be a poor return for the frank hospitality of his host to entangle his daughter's heart in an injudicious attachment. In a word, Dolph was like many other young reasoners of exceeding good hearts and giddy heads,—who think after they act, and act differently from what they think,—who make excellent determinations overnight, and forget to keep them the next morning.

"This is a fine conclusion, truly, of my voyage," said he, as he almost buried himself in a sumptuous feather-bed, and drew the fresh white sheets up to his chin. "Here am I, instead of finding a bag of money to carry home, launched in a strange place, with scarcely a stiver in my pocket; and, what is worse, have jumped ashore up to my very ears in love into the bargain. However," added he, after some pause, stretching himself, and turning himself in bed, "I 'm in good quarters for the present, at least; so I 'll e'en enjoy the present moment, and let the

next take care of itself; I dare say all will work out, 'somehow or other,' for the best."

As he said these words, he reached out his hand to extinguish the candle, when he was suddenly struck with astonishment and dismay, for he thought he beheld the phantom of the haunted house, staring on him from a dusky part of the chamber. A second look reassured him, as he perceived that what he had taken for the spectre was, in fact, nothing but a Flemish portrait, hanging in a shadowy corner, just behind a clothes-press. It was, however, the precise representation of his nightly visitor. The same cloak and belted jerkin, the same grizzled beard and fixed eye, the same broad slouched hat, with a feather hanging over one side. Dolph now called to mind the resemblance he had frequently remarked between his host and the old man of the haunted house; and was fully convinced that they were in some way connected, and that some especial destiny had governed his voyage. He lay gazing on the portrait with almost as much awe as he had gazed on the ghostly original, until the shrill house-clock warned him of the lateness of the hour. He put out the light; but remained for a long time turning over these curious circumstances and coincidences in his mind, until he fell asleep. His dreams partook of the nature

of his waking thoughts. He fancied that he still lay gazing on the picture, until, by degrees, it became animated; that the figure descended from the wall, and walked out of the room; that he followed it, and found himself by the well to which the old man pointed, smiled on him, and disappeared.

In the morning when he waked he found his host standing by his bedside, who gave him a hearty morning's salutation, and asked him how he had slept. Dolph answered cheerily; but took occasion to inquire about the portrait that hung against the wall. "Ah," said Heer Antony, "that 's a portrait of old Killian Vander Spiegel, once a burgomaster of Amsterdam, who, on some popular troubles, abandoned Holland and came over to the province during the government of Peter Stuyvesant. He was my ancestor by the mother's side, and an old miserly curmudgeon he was. When the English took possession of New Amsterdam, in 1664, he retired into the country. He fell into a melancholy, apprehending that his wealth would be taken from him and he come to beggary. He turned all his property into cash, and used to hide it away. He was for a year or two concealed in various places, fancying himself sought after by the English to strip him of his wealth, and finally he was found dead in his

bed one morning, without any one being able to discover where he had concealed the greater part of his money."

When his host had left the room Dolph remained for some time lost in thought. His whole mind was occupied by what he had heard. Vander Spiegel was his mother's family name, and he recollected to have heard her speak of this very Killian Vander Spiegel as one of her ancestors. He had heard her say, too, that her father was Killian's rightful heir, only that the old man died without leaving any thing to be inherited. It now appeared that Heer Antony was likewise a descendant, and perhaps an heir also of this poor rich man, and that thus the Heyligers and the Vander Heydens were remotely connected. "What," thought he, "if, after all, this is the interpretation of my dream that this is the way I am to make my fortune by this voyage to Albany, and that I am to find the old man's hidden wealth in the bottom of that well? But what an odd roundabout mode of communicating the matter! Why the plague could not the old goblin have told me about the well at once, without sending me all the way to Albany to hear a story that was to send me all the way back again?"

These thoughts passed through his mind while

he was dressing. He descended the stairs, full of perplexity, when the bright face of Marie Vander Heyden suddenly beamed in smiles upon him, and seemed to give him a clue to the whole mystery. "After all," thought he, "the old goblin is in the right. If I am to get his wealth, he means that I shall marry his pretty descendant; thus both branches of the family will again be united, and the property go on in the proper channel."

No sooner did this idea enter his head than it carried conviction with it. He was now all impatience to hurry back and secure the treasure, which, he did not doubt, lay at the bottom of the well, and which he feared every moment might be discovered by some other person. "Who knows," thought he, "but this night-walking old fellow of the haunted house may be in the habit of haunting every visitor, and may give a hint to some shrewder fellow than myself, who will take a shorter cut to the well than by the way of Albany?" He wished a thousand times that the babbling old ghost was laid in the Red Sea, and his rambling portrait with him. He was in a perfect fever to depart. Two or three days elapsed before any opportunity presented for returning down the river. They were ages to Dolph, notwithstanding that he was basking in the smiles of the pretty

Marie, and daily getting more and more enamoured.

At length the very sloop from which he had been knocked overboard prepared to make sail. Dolph made an awkward apology to his host for his sudden departure. Antony Vander Heyden was sorely astonished. He had concerted half a dozen excursions into the wilderness, and his Indians were actually preparing for a grand expedition to one of the lakes. He took Dolph aside, and exerted his eloquence to get him to abandon all thoughts of business, and to remain with him; but in vain; and he at length gave up the attempt, observing "that it was a thousand pities so fine a young man should throw himself away." Heer Antony, however, gave him a hearty shake by the hand at parting, with a favorite fowling-piece, and an invitation to come to his house whenever he revisited Albany. The pretty little Marie said nothing; but as he gave her a farewell kiss her dimpled cheek turned pale and a tear stood in her eye.

Dolph sprang lightly on board of the vessel. They hoisted sail; the wind was fair; they soon lost sight of Albany, its green hills and embowered islands. They were wafted gayly past the Kaatskill Mountains, whose fairy heights were bright and cloudless. They passed pros-

perously through the highlands, without any molestation from the Dunderberg goblin and his crew; they swept on across Haverstraw Bay, and by Croton Point, and through the Tappaan Zee, and under the Palisadoes, until in the afternoon of the third day they saw the promontory of Hoboken hanging like a cloud in the air, and shortly after the roofs of the Manhattoes rising out of the water.

Dolph's first care was to repair to his mother's house; for he was continually goaded by the idea of the uneasiness she must experience on his account. He was puzzling his brains, as he went along, to think how he should account for his absence without betraying the secrets of the haunted house. In the midst of these cogitations he entered the street in which his mother's house was situated, and he was thunderstruck at beholding it a heap of ruins.

There had evidently been a great fire, which had destroyed several large houses, and the humble dwelling of poor Dame Heyliger had been involved in the conflagration. The walls were not so completely destroyed, but that Dolph could distinguish some traces of the scene of his childhood. The fireplace, about which he had often played, still remained, ornamented with Dutch tiles, illustrating passages in Bible history, on which he had many a time

gazed with admiration. Among the rubbish lay the wreck of the good dame's elbow-chair, from which she had given him so many a wholesome precept; and hard by it was the family Bible, with brass clasps; now alas! reduced almost to a cinder.

For a moment Dolph was overcome by this dismal sight, for he was seized with the fear that his mother had perished in the flames. He was relieved, however, from this horrible apprehension by one of the neighbors, who happened to come by, and informed him that his mother was yet alive.

The good woman had, indeed, lost everything by this unlooked-for calamity; for the populace had been so intent upon saving the fine furniture of her rich neighbors, that the little tenement, and the little all of poor Dame Heyliger, had been suffered to consume without interruption; nay, had it not been for the gallant assistance of her old crony, Peter de Groodt, the worthy dame and her cat might have shared the fate of their habitation.

As it was she had been overcome with fright and affliction, and lay ill in body and sick at heart. The public, however, had showed her its wonted kindness. The furniture of her rich neighbors being, as far as possible, rescued from the flames; themselves duly and ceremoniously

visited and condoled with on the injury of their property, and their ladies commiserated on the agitation of their nerves, the public, at length, began to recollect something about poor Dame Heyliger. She forthwith became again a subject of universal sympathy; everybody pitied her more than ever; and if pity could but have been coined into cash—good Lord! how rich she would have been!

It was now determincd, in good earnest, that something ought to be done for her without delay. The dominie, therefore, put up prayers for her on Sunday, in which all the congregation joined most heartily. Even Cobus Groesbeek, the alderman, and Mynheer Milledollar, the great Dutch merchant, stood up in their pews and did not spare their voices on the occasion; and it was thought that the prayers of such great men could not but have their due weight. Doctor Knipperhausen, too, visited her professionally, and gave her abundance of advice gratis, and was universally lauded for charity. As to her old friend, Peter de Groodt, he was a poor man, whose pity and prayers and advice could be of but little avail, so he gave her all that was in his power—he gave her shelter.

To the humble dwelling of Peter de Groodt, then, did Dolph turn his steps. On his way thither he recalled all the tenderness and kind-

ness of his simple-hearted parent, her indulgence of his errors, her blindness to his faults; and then he bethought himself of his own idle, harum-scarum life. "I 've been a sad scapegrace," said Dolph, shaking his head sorrowfully. "I 've been a complete sink-pocket, that 's the truth of it.—But," added he briskly, and clasping his hands, "only let her live—only let her live—and I 'll show myself indeed a son!"

As Dolph approached the house he met Peter de Groodt coming out of it. The old man started back aghast, doubting whether it was not a ghost that stood before him. It being bright daylight, however, Peter soon plucked up heart, satisfied that no ghost dare show his face in such clear sunshine. Dolph now learned from the worthy sexton the consternation and rumor to which his mysterious disappearance had given rise. It had been universally believed that he had been spirited away by those hobgoblin gentry that infested the haunted house; and old Abraham Vandozer, who lived by the great buttonwood-trees, near the three-mile stone, affirmed that he had heard a terrible noise in the air, as he was going home late at night, which seemed just as if a flock of wild geese were overhead, passing off towards the northward. The haunted house was, in conse-

quence, looked upon with ten times more awe than ever; nobody would venture to pass a night in it for the world, and even the doctor had ceased to make his expeditions to it in the daytime.

It required some preparation before Dolph's return could be made known to his mother, the poor soul having bewailed him as lost; and her spirits having been sorely broken down by a number of comforters, who daily cheered her with stories of ghosts, and of people carried away by the devil. He found her confined to her bed, with the other member of the Heyliger family, the good dame's cat, purring beside her, but sadly singed, and utterly despoiled of those whiskers which were the glory of her physiognomy. The poor woman threw her arms about Dolph's neck: "My boy! my boy! art thou still alive?" For a time she seemed to have forgotten all her losses and troubles in her joy at his return. Even the sage grimalkin showed indubitable signs of joy at the return of the youngster. She saw, perhaps, that they were a forlorn and undone family, and felt a touch of that kindliness which fellow sufferers only know. But, in truth, cats are a slandered people; they have more affection in them than the world commonly gives them credit for.

The good dame's eyes glistened as she saw one being at least, beside herself, rejoiced at her son's return. "Tib knows thee! poor dumb beast!" said she, smoothing down the mottled coat of her favorite; then recollecting herself, with a melancholy shake of the head, "Ah, my poor Dolph!" exclaimed she, "thy mother can help thee no longer! She can no longer help herself! What will become of thee, my poor boy?"

"Mother," said Dolph, "don't talk in that strain; I 've been too long a charge upon you; it 's now my part to take care of you in your old days. Come! be of good cheer! you, and I, and Tib will all see better days. I 'm here, you see, young, and sound, and hearty; then don't let us despair; I dare say things will all, somehow or other, turn out for the best."

While this scene was going on with the Heyliger family, the news was carried to Doctor Knipperhausen of the safe return of his disciple. The little doctor scarce knew whether to rejoice or be sorry at the tidings. He was happy at having the foul reports which had prevailed concerning his country mansion thus disproved; but he grieved at having his disciple, of whom he had supposed himself fairly disencumbered, thus drifting back, a heavy charge upon his hands. While balancing between these two feelings, he was determined by the counsels of

Frau Ilsy, who advised him to take advantage of the truant absence of the youngster, and shut the door upon him forever.

At the hour of bedtime, therefore, when it was supposed the recreant disciple would seek his old quarters, every thing was prepared for his reception. Dolph, having talked his mother into a state of tranquillity, sought the mansion of his quondam master, and raised the knocker with a faltering hand. Scarcely, however, had it given a dubious rap, when the doctor's head, in a red nightcap, popped out of one window, and the housekeeper's, in a white nightcap, out of another. He was now greeted with a tremendous volley of hard names and hard language, mingled with invaluable pieces of advice, such as are seldom ventured to be given except to a friend in distress, or a culprit at the bar. In a few moments, not a window in the street but had its particular nightcap, listening to the shrill treble of Frau Ilsy, and the guttural croaking of Dr. Knipperhausen; and the word went from window to window: "Ah! here 's Dolph Heyliger come back, and at his old pranks again." In short, poor Dolph found he was likely to get nothing from the doctor but good advice; a commodity so abundant as even to be thrown out of the window; so he was fain to beat a retreat, and take up his quar-

ters for the night under the lowly roof of honest Peter de Groodt.

The next morning, bright and early, Dolph was out at the haunted house. Every thing looked just as he had left it. The fields were grass-grown and matted, and appeared as if nobody had traversed them since his departure. With palpitating heart he hastened to the well. He looked down into it, and saw that it was of great depth, with water at the bottom. He had provided himself with a strong line, such as the fishermen use on the banks of Newfoundland. At the end was a heavy plummet and a large fish-hook. With this he began to sound the bottom of the well, and to angle about in the water. The water was of some depth; there was also much rubbish, stones from the top having fallen in. Several times his hook got entangled, and he came near breaking his line. Now and then, two, he hauled up mere trash, such as the skull of a horse, an iron hoop, and a shattered iron-bound bucket. He had now been several hours employed without finding any thing to repay his trouble, or to encourage him to proceed. He began to think himself a great fool, to be thus decoyed into a wild-goose chase by mere dreams, and was on the point of throwing line and all into the well, and giving up all further angling.

"One more cast of the line," said he, "and that shall be the last." As he sounded, he felt the plummet slip, as it were, through the interstices of loose stones; and as he drew back the line, he felt that the hook had taken hold of something heavy. He had to manage his line with great caution, lest it should be broken by the strain upon it. By degrees the rubbish which lay upon the article he had hooked gave way; he drew it to the surface of the water, and what was his rapture at seeing something like silver glittering at the end of his line! Almost breathless with anxiety, he drew it up to the mouth of the well, surprised at its great weight, and fearing every instant that his hook would slip from its hold, and his prize tumble again to the bottom. At length he landed it safe beside the well. It was a great silver porringer, of an ancient form, richly embossed, and with armorial bearings engraved on its side, similar to those over his mother's mantelpiece. The lid was fastened down by several twists of wire; Dolph loosened them with a trembling hand, and, on lifting the lid, behold! the vessel was filled with broad golden pieces, of a coinage which he had never seen before! It was evident he had lit on the place where Killian Vander Spiegel had concealed his treasure.

Fearful of being seen by some straggler, he

cautiously retired, and buried his pot of money in a secret place. He now spread terrible stories about the haunted house, and deterred every one from approaching it, while he made frequent visits to it in stormy days, when no one was stirring in the neighboring fields; though, to tell the truth, he did not care to venture there in the dark. For once in his life he was diligent and industrious, and followed up his new trade of angling with such perseverance and success, that in a little while he had hooked up wealth enough to make him, in those moderate days, a rich burgher for life.

It would be tedious to detail minutely the rest of this story. To tell how he gradually managed to bring his property into use without exciting surprise and inquiry,—how he satisfied all scruples with regard to retaining the property, and at the same time gratified his own feelings by marrying the pretty Marie Vander Heyden,—and how he and Heer Antony had many a merry and roving expedition together.

I must not omit to say, however, that Dolph took his mother home to live with him, and cherished her in her old days. The good dame, too, had the satisfaction of no longer hearing her son made the theme of censure; on the contrary, he grew daily in public esteem; everybody spoke well of him and his wines,

and the lordliest burgomaster was never known to decline his invitation to dinner. Dolph often related, at his own table, the wicked pranks which had once been the abhorrence of the town; but they were now considered excellent jokes, and the gravest dignitary was fain to hold his sides when listening to them. No one was more struck with Dolph's increasing merit than his old master the doctor; and so forgiving was Dolph, that he absolutely employed the doctor as his family physician, only taking care that his prescriptions should be always thrown out of the window. His mother had often her junto of old cronies to take a snug cup of tea with her in her comfortable little parlor; and Peter de Groodt, as he sat by the fireside, with one of her grandchildren on his knee, would many a time congratulate her upon her son turning out so great a man, upon which the good old soul would wag her head with exultation, and exclaim: "Ah, neighbor, neighbor! did I not say that Dolph would one day or other hold up his head with the best of them?"

Thus did Dolph Heyliger go on, cheerily and prosperously, growing merrier as he grew older and wiser, and completely falsifying the old proverb about money got over the Devil's back, for he made good use of his wealth, and became a distinguished citizen, and a valuable

member of the community. He was a great promoter of public institutions, such as beefsteak societies and catch-clubs. He presided at all public dinners, and was the first that introduced turtle from the West Indies. He improved the breed of race-horses and game-cocks, and was so great a patron of modest merit that any one who could sing a good song, or tell a good story, was sure to find a place at his table.

He was a member, too, of the corporation, made several laws for the protection of game and oysters, and bequeathed to the board a large silver punch-bowl, made out of the identical porringer before mentioned, and which is in the possession of the corporation to this day.

Finally, he died, in a florid old age, of an apoplexy at a corporation feast, and was buried with great honors in the yard of the little Dutch church in Garden Street, where his tombstone may still be seen with a modest epitaph in Dutch, by his friend Mynheer Justus Benson, an ancient and excellent poet of the province.

The foregoing tale rests on better authority than most tales of the kind, as I have it at second-hand from the lips of Dolph Heyliger himself. He never related it till towards the latter part of his life, and then in great confidence (for he was very discreet), to a few of his

particular cronies at his own table, over a supernumerary bowl of punch; and, strange as the hobgoblin parts of the story may seem, there never was a single doubt expressed on the subject by any of his guests. It may not be amiss, before concluding, to observe that, in addition to his other accomplishments, Dolph Heyliger was noted for being the ablest drawer of the long-bow in the whole province

THE WEDDING.

No more, no more, much honor aye betide
The lofty bridegroom, and the lovely bride ;
That all of their succeeding days may say,
Each day appears like to a wedding day.
BRAITHWAITE.

NOTWITHSTANDING the doubts and the demurs of Lady Lillycraft, and all the grave objections conjured up against the month of May, the wedding has at length happily taken place. It was celebrated at the village church, in presence of a numerous company of relatives and friends, and many of the tenantry. The Squire must needs have something of the old ceremonies observed on the occasion ; so, at the gate of the churchyard, several little girls of the village, dressed in white, were in readiness with baskets of flowers, which they strewed before the bride ; and the butler bore before her the bride-cup, a great silver embossed bowl, one of the family relics from the days of the hard drinkers. This was filled with rich wine, and

decorated with a branch of rosemary, tied with gay ribbons, according to ancient custom.

"Happy is the bride that the sun shines on," says the old proverb; and it was as sunny and auspicious a morning as heart could wish. The bride looked uncommonly beautiful; but, in fact, what woman does not look interesting on her wedding-day? I know no sight more charming and touching than that of a young and timid bride, in her robes of virgin white, led up trembling to the altar. When I thus behold a lovely girl, in the tenderness of her years, forsaking the house of her fathers, and the home of her childhood; and with the implicit confiding, and the sweet self-abandonment, which belong to woman, giving up all the world for the man of her choice; when I hear her, in the good old language of the ritual, yielding herself to him, "for better for worse, for richer for poorer, in sickness and in health, to love, honor, and obey till death us do part," it brings to my mind the beautiful and affecting self-devotion of Ruth: "Whither thou goest I will go, and where thou lodgest I will lodge; thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God."

The fair Julia was supported on the trying occasion by Lady Lillycraft, whose heart was overflowing with its wonted sympathy in all matters

of love and matrimony. As the bride approached the altar, her face would be one moment covered with blushes, and the next deadly pale; and she seemed almost ready to shrink from sight among her female companions.

I do not know what it is that makes every one serious, and, as it were, awe-struck, at a marriage ceremony; which is generally considered an occasion of festivity and rejoicing. As the ceremony was performing, I observed many a rosy face among the country-girls turn pale, and I did not see a smile throughout the church. The young ladies from the Hall were almost as much frightened as if it had been their own case, and stole many a look of sympathy at their trembling companion. A tear stood in the eye of the sensitive Lady Lillycraft; and as to Phœbe Wilkins, who was present, she absolutely wept and sobbed aloud; but it is hard to tell, half the time, what these fond foolish creatures are crying about.

The captain, too, though naturally gay and unconcerned, was much agitated on the occasion; and, in attempting to put the ring upon the bride's finger, dropped it on the floor; which Lady Lillycraft has since assured me is a very lucky omen. Even Master Simon had lost his usual vivacity, and assumed a most whimsically solemn face, which he is apt to do

on all occasions of ceremony. He had much whispering with the parson and parish-clerk, for he is always a busy personage in the scene, and he echoed the clerk's amen with a solemnity and devotion that edified the whole assemblage.

The moment, however, that the ceremony was over, the transition was magical. The bride-cup was passed round, according to ancient usage, for the company to drink to a happy union; every one's feelings seemed to break forth from restraint. Master Simon had a world of bachelor pleasantries to utter, and as to the gallant general, he bowed and cooed about the dulcet Lady Lillycraft like a mighty cock-pigeon about his dame.

The villagers gathered in the churchyard to cheer the happy couple as they left the church, and the musical tailor had marshalled his band, and set up a hideous discord, as the blushing and smiling bride passed through a lane of honest peasantry to her carriage. The children shouted and threw up their hats; the bells rang a merry peal that set all the crows and rooks flying and cawing about the air, and threatened to bring down the battlements of the old tower; and there was a continual popping off of rusty firelocks from every part of the neighborhood.

The prodigal son distinguished himself on

the occasion, having hoisted a flag on the top of the schoolhouse, and kept the village in a hubbub from sunrise, with the sound of drum and fife and pandean pipe; in which species of music several of his scholars are making wonderful proficiency. In his great zeal, however, he had nearly done mischief; for on returning from church, the horses of the bride's carriage took fright from the discharge of a row of old gun-barrels, which he had mounted as a park of artillery in front of the schoolhouse to give the captain a military salute as he passed.

The day passed off with great rustic rejoicing. Tables were spread under the trees in the park, where all the peasantry of the neighborhood were regaled with roast-beef and plum-pudding, and oceans of ale. Ready-Money Jack presided at one of the tables, and became so full of good cheer as to unbend from his usual gravity, to sing a song out of all tune, and give two or three shouts of laughter that almost electrified his neighbors like so many peals of thunder. The schoolmaster and the apothecary vied with each other in making speeches over their liquor; and there were occasional glees and musical performances by the village band, that must have frightened every faun and dryad from the park. Even old Christy, who had got on a new dress from top to toe, and shone in all the

splendor of bright leather-breeches, and an enormous wedding favor in his cap, forgot his usual crustiness, became inspired by wine and wassail, and absolutely danced a hornpipe on one of the tables, with all the grace and agility of a mannikin hung upon wires.

Equal gayety reigned within doors, where a large party of friends were entertained. Every one laughed at his own pleasantry, without attending to that of his neighbor's. Loads of bride-cake were distributed. The young ladies were all busy in passing morsels of it through the wedding-ring to dream on, and I myself assisted a little boarding-school girl in putting up a quantity for her companions, which I have no doubt will set all the little heads in the school gadding, for a week at least.

After dinner all the company, great and small, gentle and simple, abandoned themselves to the dance: not the modern quadrille, with its graceful gravity, but the merry, social, old country-dance: the true dance, as the Squire says, for a wedding occasion, as it sets all the world jigging in couples, hand in hand, and makes every eye and every heart dance merrily to the music. According to frank old usage, the gentlefolks of the Hall mingled for a time in the dance of the peasantry, who had a great tent erected for a ball-room; and I think I

never saw Master Simon more in his element than when figuring about among his rustic admirers as master of the ceremonies; and, with a mingled air of protection and gallantry, leading out the quondam Queen of May, all blushing at the signal honor conferred upon her.

In the evening the whole village was illuminated, excepting the house of the radical, who has not shown his face during the rejoicings. There was a display of fireworks at the schoolhouse, got up by the prodigal son, which had wellnigh set fire to the building. The Squire is so much pleased with the extraordinary services of this last-mentioned worthy, that he talks of enrolling him in his list of valuable retainers, and promoting him to some important post on the estate; peradventure to be falconer, if the hawks can ever be brought into proper training.

There is a well-known old proverb, which says "one wedding makes many,"—or something to the same purpose; and I should not be surprised if it holds good in the present instance. I have seen several flirtations among the young people brought together on this occasion; and a great deal of strolling about in pairs, among the retired walks and blossoming shrubberies of the old garden: and if groves were really given to whispering, as poets would fain make us believe, Heaven knows what love-tales the grave-looking

old trees about this venerable country-seat might blab to the world.

The general, too, has waxed very zealous in his devotions within the past few days, as the time of her ladyship's departure approaches. I observed him casting many a tender look at her during the wedding dinner, while the courses were changing; though he was always liable to be interrupted in his adoration by the appearance of any new delicacy. The general, in fact, has arrived at that time of life when the heart and the stomach maintain a kind of balance of power, and when a man is apt to be perplexed in his affections between a fine woman and a truffled turkey. Her ladyship was certainly rivalled through the whole of the first course by a dish of stewed carp; and there was one glance, which was evidently intended to be a point-blank shot at her heart, and could scarcely have failed to effect a practicable breach, had it not unluckily been directed away to a tempting breast of lamb, in which it immediately produced a formidable incision.

Thus did this faithless general go on, coquetting during the whole dinner, and committing an infidelity with every new dish; until, in the end, he was so overpowered by the attentions he had paid to fish, flesh, and fowl, to pastry, jelly, cream, and blanc-mange, that he seemed to sink

within himself; his eyes swam beneath their lids, and their fire was so much slackened that he could no longer discharge a single glance that would reach across the table. Upon the whole, I fear the general ate himself into as much disgrace, at this memorable dinner, as I have seen him sleep himself into on a former occasion.

I am told, moreover, that young Jack Tibbets was so touched by the wedding ceremony, at which he was present, and so captivated by the sensibility of poor Phœbe Wilkins, who certainly looked all the better for her tears, that he had a reconciliation with her that very day after dinner, in one of the groves of the park, and danced with her in the evening; to the complete confusion of all Dame Tibbets's domestic politics. I met them walking together in the park, shortly after the reconciliation must have taken place. Young Jack carried himself gayly and manfully; but Phœbe hung her head, blushing, as I approached. However, just as she passed me and dropped a courtesy, I caught a shy gleam of her eye from under her bonnet; but it was immediately cast down again. I saw enough in that single gleam, and in an involuntary smile dimpling about her rosy lips, to feel satisfied that the little gypsy's heart was happy again.

What is more, Lady Lillycraft, with her usual benevolence and zeal in all matters of this tender nature, on hearing of the reconciliation of the lovers, undertook the critical task of breaking the matter to Ready-Money Jack. She thought there was no time like the present, and attacked the sturdy old yeoman that very evening in the park, while his heart was yet lifted up with the Squire's good cheer. Jack was a little surprised at being drawn aside by her ladyship, but was not to be flurried by such an honor; he was still more surprised by the nature of her communication, and by this first intelligence of an affair that had been passing under his eye. He listened, however, with his usual gravity, as her ladyship represented the advantages of the match, the good qualities of the girl, and the distress which she had lately suffered: at length his eye began to kindle, and his hand to play with the head of his cudgel. Lady Lillycraft saw that something in the narrative had gone wrong, and hastened to mollify his rising ire by reiterating the soft-hearted Phœbe's merit and fidelity, and her great unhappiness; when old Ready-Money suddenly interrupted her by exclaiming that, if Jack did not marry the wench, he 'd break every bone in his body! The match, therefore, is considered a settled thing: Dame Tibbets and

the housekeeper have made friends, and drunk tea together; and Phœbe has again recovered her good looks and good spirits, and is carolling from morning till night like a lark.

But the most whimsical caprice of Cupid is one that I should be almost afraid to mention, did I not know that I was writing for readers well experienced in the waywardness of this most mischievous deity. The morning after the wedding, therefore, while Lady Lillycraft was making preparations for her departure, an audience was requested by her immaculate handmaid, Mrs. Hannah, who, with much primming of the mouth, and many maidenly hesitations, requested leave to stay behind, and that Lady Lillycraft would supply her place with some other servant. Her ladyship was astonished; "What! Hannah going to quit her, that had lived with her so long!"

"Why, one could not help it; one must settle in life some time or other."

The good lady was still lost in amazement; at length the secret was gasped from the dry lips of the maiden gentlewoman: "She had been some time thinking of changing her condition, and at length had given her word, last evening, to Mr. Christy, the huntsman."

How, or when, or where this singular courtship had been carried on, I have not been able

to learn; nor how she has been able, with the vinegar of her disposition, to soften the stony heart of old Nimrod; so, however, it is, and it has astonished every one. With all her ladyship's love of match-making, this last fume of Hymen's torch has been too much for her. She has endeavored to reason with Mrs. Hannah, but all in vain; her mind was made up, and she grew tart on the least contradiction. Lady Lillycraft applied to the Squire for his interference. She did not know what she should do without Mrs. Hannah, she had been used to have her about her so long a time.

The Squire, on the contrary, rejoiced in the match, as relieving the good lady from a kind of toilet-tyrant, under whose sway she had suffered for years. Instead of thwarting the affair, therefore, he has given it his full countenance, and declares that he will set up the young couple in one of the best cottages on his estate. The approbation of the Squire has been followed by that of the whole household; they all declare that, if ever matches are ready-made in heaven, this must have been, for that old Christy and Mrs. Hannah were as evidently formed to be linked together as ever were pepper-box and vinegar-cruet.

As soon as this matter was arranged, Lady Lillycraft took her leave of the family at the

Hall, taking with her the captain and his blushing bride, who are to pass the honeymoon with her. Master Simon accompanied them on horseback, and indeed means to ride on ahead to make preparations. The general, who was fishing in vain for an invitation to her seat, handed her ladyship into her carriage with a heavy sigh; upon which his bosom-friend, Master Simon, who was just mounting his horse, gave me a knowing wink, made an abominably wry face, and leaning from his saddle, whispered loudly in my ear: "It won't do!" Then putting spurs to his horse, away he cantered off. The general stood for some time waving his hat after the carriage as it rolled down the avenue, until he was seized with a fit of sneezing, from exposing his head to the cool breeze. I observed that he returned rather thoughtfully to the house, whistling softly to himself, with his hands behind his back, and an exceedingly dubious air.

The company have now almost all taken their departure; I have determined to do the same to-morrow morning; and I hope my reader may not think that I have already lingered too long at the Hall. I have been tempted to do so, however, because I thought I had lit upon one of the retired places where there are yet some traces to be met with of old English char-

acter. A little while hence, and all these will probably have passed away. Ready-Money Jack will sleep with his fathers; the good Squire, and all his peculiarities, will be buried in the neighboring church. The old Hall will be modernized into a fashionable country-seat, or, peradventure, a manufactory. The park will be cut up into petty farms and kitchen-gardens. A daily coach will run through the village; it will become, like all other commonplace villages, thronged with coachmen, post-boys, tipplers, and politicians; and Christmas, May-day, and all the other hearty merry-makings of the "good old times," will be forgotten.

THE AUTHOR'S FAREWELL.

And so, without more circumstance at all,
I hold it fit that we shake hands and part.
HAMLET.

HAVING taken leave of the Hall and its inmates, and brought the history of my visit to something like a close, there seems to remain nothing further than to make my bow and exit. It is my foible, however, to get on such companionable terms with my reader in the course of a work, that it really costs me some pain to part with him, and I am apt to keep him by the hand, and have a few farewell words at the end of my last volume.

When I cast an eye back upon the work I am just concluding, I cannot but be sensible how full it must be of errors and imperfections; indeed, how should it be otherwise, writing, as I do, about subjects and scenes with which, as a stranger, I am but partially acquainted?

Many will, doubtless, find cause to smile at very obvious blunders which I may have made; and many may, perhaps, be offended at what they may conceive prejudiced representations. Some will think I might have said much more on such subjects as may suit their peculiar tastes; whilst others will think I had done wiser to have left those subjects entirely alone.

It will probably be said, too, by some that I view England with a partial eye. Perhaps I do; for I can never forget that it is my "fatherland." And yet the circumstances under which I have viewed it have by no means been such as were calculated to produce favorable impressions. For the greater part of the time that I have resided in it, I have lived almost unknowing and unknown, seeking no favors and receiving none —"a stranger and a sojourner in the land," and subject to all the chills and neglects that are the common lot of the stranger.

When I consider these circumstances, and recollect how often I have taken up my pen with a mind ill at ease and spirits much dejected and cast down, I cannot but think I was not likely to err on the favorable side of the picture. The opinions I have given of English character have been the result of much quiet, dispassionate, and varied observation. It is a character not to be hastily studied, for it always puts on

a repulsive and ungracious aspect to a stranger. Let those, then, who condemn my representations as too favorable, observe this people as closely and deliberately as I have done, and they will probably change their opinion. Of one thing, at any rate, I am certain, that I have spoken honestly and sincerely, from the convictions of my mind and the dictates of my heart. When I first published my former writings, it was with no hope of gaining favor in English eyes, for I little thought they were to become current out of my own country, and had I merely sought popularity among my own countrymen, I should have taken a more direct and obvious way, by gratifying rather than rebuking the angry feelings then prevalent against England.

And here let me acknowledge my warm, my thankful feelings, at the effect produced by one of my trivial lucubrations. I allude to the essay in the "Sketch-Book," on the subject of the literary feuds between England and America. I cannot express the heartfelt delight I have experienced at the unexpected sympathy and approbation with which those remarks have been received on both sides of the Atlantic. I speak this not from any paltry feelings of gratified vanity, for I attribute the effect to no merit of my pen. The paper in question was brief and

casual, and the ideas it conveyed were simple and obvious. "It was the cause; it was the cause" alone. There was a predisposition on the part of my readers to be favorably affected. My countrymen responded in heart to the filial feelings I had avowed in their name towards the parent country, and there was a generous sympathy in every English bosom towards a solitary individual, lifting up his voice in a strange land, to vindicate the injured character of his nation. There are some causes so sacred as to carry with them an irresistible appeal to every virtuous bosom, and he needs but little power of eloquence who defends the honor of his wife, his mother, or his country.

I hail, therefore, the success of that brief paper as showing how much good may be done by a kind word, however feeble, when spoken in season—as showing how much dormant good feeling actually exists in each country towards the other, which only wants the slightest spark to kindle it into a genial flame—as showing, in fact, what I have all along believed and asserted, that the two nations would grow together in esteem and amity, if meddling and malignant spirits would but throw by their mischievous pens and leave kindred hearts to the kindly impulses of nature.

I once more assert, and I assert it with in-

creased conviction of its truth, that there exists among the great majority of my countrymen a favorable feeling toward England. I repeat this assertion because I think it a truth that cannot too often be reiterated, and because it has met with some contradiction. Among all the liberal and enlightened minds of my countrymen, all those which eventually give a tone to national opinion, there exists a cordial desire to be on terms of courtesy and friendship. But at the same time there exists in those very minds a distrust of reciprocal good-will on the part of England. They have been rendered morbidly sensitive by the attacks made upon their country by the English press, and their occasional irritability on this subject has been misinterpreted into a settled and unnatural hostility.

For my part, I consider this jealous sensibility as belonging to generous natures. I should look upon my countrymen as fallen indeed from that independence of spirit which is their birth-gift, as fallen indeed from that pride of character which they inherit from the proud nation from which they sprung, could they tamely sit down under the infliction of contumely and insult. Indeed the very impatience which they show as to the misrepresentations of the press proves their respect for English

opinion and their desire for English amity; for there is never jealousy where there is not strong regard.

It is easy to say that these attacks are all the effusions of worthless scribblers, and treated with silent contempt by the nation; but, alas! the slanders of the scribbler travel abroad, and the silent contempt of the nation is only known at home. With England, then, it remains, as I have formerly asserted, to promote a mutual spirit of conciliation; she has but to hold the language of friendship and respect, and she is secure of the good-will of every American bosom.

In expressing these sentiments I would utter nothing that would commit the proper spirit of my countrymen. We seek no boon at England's hands; we ask nothing as a favor. Her friendship is not necessary, nor would her hostility be dangerous, to our well-being. We ask nothing from abroad that we cannot reciprocate. But with respect to England, we have a warm feeling of the heart, the glow of consanguinity that still lingers in our blood. Interest apart—past differences forgotten—we extend the hand of old relationship. We merely ask, do not estrange us from you; do not destroy the ancient tie of blood; do not let scoffers and slanderers drive a kindred nation from your

side; we would fain be friends; do not compel us to be enemies.

There needs no better rallying ground for international amity than that furnished by an eminent English writer. "There is," says he, "a sacred bond between us of blood and of language, which no circumstance can break. Our literature must always be theirs; and though their laws are no longer the same as ours, we have the same Bible, and we address our common Father in the same prayer. Nations are too ready to admit that they have natural enemies; why should they be less willing to believe that they have natural friends?" *

To the magnanimous spirits of both countries must we trust to carry such a natural alliance of affection into full effect. To pens more powerful than mine I leave the noble task of promoting the cause of national amity. To the intelligent and enlightened of my own country I address my parting voice, entreating them to show themselves superior to the petty attacks of the ignorant and the worthless, and still to look with dispassionate and philosophic eye to the moral character of England, as the intellectual source of our rising greatness; while I

* From an article (said to be by Robert Southey, Esq.) published in the *Quarterly Review*. It is to be lamented that that publication should so often forget the generous text here given.

appeal to every generous-minded Englishman from the slanders which disgrace the press, insult the understanding, and belie the magnanimity of his country; and I invite him to look to America as to a kindred nation worthy of its origin; giving in the healthy vigor of its growth, the best of comments on its parent stock; and reflecting, in the dawning brightness of its fame, the moral effulgence of British glory.

I am sure that such an appeal will not be made in vain. Indeed, I have noticed, for some time past, an essential change in English sentiment with regard to America. In Parliament, that fountain-head of public opinion, there seems to be an emulation, on both sides of the house, in holding the language of courtesy and friendship. The same spirit is daily becoming more and more prevalent in good society. There is a growing curiosity concerning my country; a craving desire for correct information, that cannot fail to lead to a favorable understanding. The scoffer, I trust, has had his day; the time of the slanderer is gone by; the ribald jokes, the stale commonplaces, which have so long passed current when America was the theme, are now banished to the ignorant and the vulgar, or only perpetuated by hireling scribblers and traditional jesters of the press. The intel-

ligent and highminded now pride themselves upon making America a study.

But however my feelings may be understood or reciprocated on either side of the Atlantic, I utter them without reserve, for I have ever found that to speak frankly is to speak safely. I am not so sanguine as to believe that the two nations are ever to be bound together by any romantic ties of feeling; but I believe that much may be done towards keeping alive cordial sentiments, were every well-disposed mind occasionally to throw in a simple word of kindness. If I have, indeed, produced any such effect by my writings, it will be a soothing reflection to me, that for once, in the course of a rather negligent life, I have been useful; that for once, by the casual exercise of a pen which has been in general but too unprofitably employed, I have awakened a chord of sympathy between the land of my fathers and the dear land which gave me birth.

In the spirit of these sentiments I now take my farewell of the paternal soil. With anxious eye do I behold the clouds of doubt and difficulty that lower over it, and earnestly do I hope they may all clear up into serene and settled sunshine. In bidding this last adieu, my heart is filled with fond yet melancholy emotions; and still I linger, and still, like a

child leaving the venerable abode of his forefathers, I turn to breathe forth a filial benediction: "Peace be within thy walls, O England! and plenteousness within thy palaces; for my brethren and my companions' sake I will now say, Peace be within thee!"

THE END.